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Pepperdine University

Graziadio School of Business

PROJECT HOPE: THE IMPACT OF COACHING AND TRANSFORMATION AMONG RETURNING CITIZENS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

by

Mark Keven Cox

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DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

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DEDICATION

To my mother, Shirley Ilene Cox, who showed me the meaning of perseverance and commitment to excellence and whose unwavering fostering of my education was expressed through the hands with which she labored to ensure the opportunities available to me would exceed hers; to my father, Orval Jasper Cox, whose love sustained me during the most difficult times of my youth and who taught me the meaning of loving others through lessons that continue to teach; to my precious wife, Karen, who continues to light my life with everything that love has to offer, doing so in abundance, cheerfulness, and kindness, always pointing me to Christ; to my children Sarah, Andrew, and Steven, each of whom I admire and am deeply proud of, I dedicate this work as an offering of thanks to my Savior, Jesus Christ, who redeemed me from the pit and gave me everlasting hope.

"Do not call to mind the former things,

Or consider things of the past.

Behold, I am going to do something new,

Now it will spring up;

Will you not be aware of it?

I will even make a roadway in the wilderness,

Rivers in the desert."

Isaiah 43:18-19

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Romans 12:2

“It *(love)* keeps every confidence, it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

1 Corinthians 13:7

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

1 Peter 1:3

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I acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of the sixteen returning citizens who participated in this study and whose lived experiences formed the basis for this research. Through completing the coaching program at FCI McKean, they showed the courage to be vulnerable, taking a look at themselves in a mirror provided by a coaching program that would open the door to transformation, goal pursuit, and better lives. They faced challenges that are difficult for most people to imagine and showed the courage to hope. I deeply admire them and thank them for coaching me in a way that has increased my ability to hope. Their lived experiences offer hope to all persons, particularly to those who are incarcerated.

Warden Susan (Folk) Morris is a believer in the potential of others. Compelled by her faith in Our Creator, she intervened in the lives of men who were entrusted to her care, serving as an instrument of God in helping them break the shackles that bound them. It has been a tremendous honor to get to know this hero of our times and to study the beautiful fruit of her work. It is encouraging to know that there are Susan (Folk) Morris's in this world.

I offer my deep appreciation to my dissertation supervisor - University Professor at Pepperdine University, Dr. Cristina Gibson, whose extraordinary intellect is exceeded only by her desire to see all, regardless of their circumstances, have the best opportunity to succeed in life. Without her support, neither the opportunity to do this research nor the depth of insight produced would have been possible. Additionally, I would like to thank my secondary advisor and Professor at Pepperdine University, Dr. Ann Feyerherm, who taught me how to ask good questions, listen well, and talk less as I performed interviews. Also, I want to thank Mr. Mark Hecht, my outside advisor, who as an internationally acclaimed coaching practitioner and author, offered valuable insights into this research. During our 25 years of working together

professionally, he always seemed to have the right word at the right time, providing the coaching I needed to persevere toward goals.

Without the encouragement of my Pepperdine Executive Doctoral in Business Administration (EDBA) Program cohort members, all of whom I love and consider good friends, my Pepperdine professors, EDBA program director, Dr. Nelson Granados, Pepperdine director of executive program administration, Sangeetha Rao, my church small group, countless other friends, neighbors, former colleagues, and current colleagues, I would have lacked the strength to complete this journey. Their prayer support and constant encouragement has been a tremendous gift to me.

Finally, my precious family, always my rock with unwavering love and support, encouraged me to take this adventure of advancing my education in a way that had the potential to positively enhance the lives of others. Karen, Mom, Sarah, Andrew, and Steven, I am inexpressibly thankful that God has given us each other to navigate life together!

VITA

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Mark Cox has four decades of corporate leadership experience spanning the chemicals, specialty materials, and electronics industries. He was Chief Manufacturing, Supply Chain and Engineering Officer for Eastman (a global Fortune 500 specialty materials concern) from which he retired in July of 2022, following a 36-year career with the company.

At the age of 24, Mr. Cox invented novel process reaction technology that was patented and commercialized by Eastman and is still in operation today. The design and construction of the facility associated with the technology allowed him to travel the world, piquing his interest in global business. He pursed this interest both educationally and professionally through multiple assignments, affording him the opportunity to become a practiced business leader and resulting in his having P&L responsibility for businesses representing a substantial portion of Eastman's revenue. He led these businesses through a transformation from underperformance to strong profitability. Additionally, Mr. Cox has a breadth of operational experience, having progressed from the shop floor to leading 10,000 team members across Eastman's global operational footprint, inclusive of 50 manufacturing sites, engineering and construction projects totaling >$6B, global supply chain, and customer service.

An accomplished corporate board member, Mr. Cox serves on the Board of Directors of J.M. Huber Engineered Materials and Lutron Electronics, where he is a member of the finance committee. He is also a member of the Board of Advisors of Management Solutions, LLC. During his governance career, he has been called upon to mentor multiple board members. Additionally, he has a certificate in Governing Family Enterprises from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and is a member of the National Academy of Corporate Directors.

Mr. Cox has a strong interest in higher education, serving as a Trustee of Milligan University where he aided the President in establishing the first accredited four-year engineering program in the Appalachian Highlands. He also serves on the Board of Advisors for the University of Tennessee's Tickle College of Engineering.

Mr. Cox is called upon as a speaker at forums ranging from university classrooms to executive leadership gatherings at corporations, addressing subjects such as business ethics, safety leadership, and career development. He is also a recognized leader within industry as an American Institute of Chemical Engineers Fellow, a National Academy of Construction Inductee, and a past Executive Committee member of the Construction Industry Institute.

Within his community, Mark serves as a volunteer with the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Kingsport, Meals on Wheels, and church-related mission efforts. He has also held leadership roles within the United Way of Greater Kingsport Board of Directors and Leadership Kingsport. Mark holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Tennessee, an M.B.A. from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, and is a doctoral candidate at Pepperdine University.

ABSTRACT

The study of psychological transformation within the prison context appears nascent with few academic articles to be found on the subject. The few that do exist suggest that transformation in the prison context is possible. Drawing from the academic literature regarding psychological transformation, inclusive of Hope Theory and Self-efficacy Theory, this qualitative research sought to understand how cognitive coaching programs within United States prisons may foster psychological transformation and increased likelihood of societal reentry success for returning citizens. The research sits at the intersection of coaching and theories associated with psychological transformation and explores the consequences of a single carceral-based cognitive coaching program. Semi-structured interviews provided insight into participants' journeys from surviving to thriving as they experienced hope formation and transformation through the program. A new framework was developed to describe the transformation process experienced by participants who have returned to society and are exhibiting a remarkably low recidivism rate while manifesting wellness evidences, such as securing and maintaining employment. Findings showed that coaching programs within the prison context have the potential to materially improve the likelihood of post-release success for returning citizens. Findings support the use of cognitive coaching focused programs to aid hope formation and transformation for incarcerated persons, and later post-release wellness for those who become returning citizens, thereby blunting prevailing U.S. recidivism rates of 50% to >80% and aiding in addressing labor shortages. These findings have important implications for leadership of correctional institutions and governments, who can choose to implement such programs to reduce recidivism.

Keywords: cognitive coaching, prison, recidivism, returning citizens, transformation

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Overview

This research was aimed toward deepening understanding of how a prison-based cognitive coaching program was experienced by participants and promoted post-release well-being and behavior for returning citizens. A returning citizen is an individual who is returning home after being in prison or jail (National League of Cities, n.d.). Of particular interest was how the prison-based program may have fostered psychological transformation, including dignity, hope, self-efficacy, and a sense of identity, as well as the likelihood of successful societal re-entry, such as through positive workplace experiences. The project consisted of qualitative analysis of interviews with individuals who participated in the coaching program while in prison, comparing those that engaged more intensively in the program with those that had less involvement. Archival data was also analyzed for insight into the experiences in the program. The research informs prison programming, but also more generally helps to build a model of the effects of cognitive coaching applicable to this extreme setting and beyond.

Problem Addressed

For many justice involved individuals (JII, people who are now, or have spent time, in jails, youth correctional facilities, or prisons) who seek to rejoin society as returning citizens, hope is a train that has left the station. It is estimated that 700,000 people are released from US prisons each year (Goodstein, 2019). Yet, many of these returning citizens struggle to find work (Goodstein, 2019). Recidivism rates have been estimated to be as high as 44% within the first year of release, 68% within the first three years, and over 80% within nine years (Alper et al., 2018). Recidivism refers to "a return to criminal behavior after release" (Esperian, 2010, p. 320) and, within the current research, a participant who recidivated is a JII who returned to prison

after release. The financial and societal costs of both incarceration and recidivism are high (Patzelt et al., 2014), with U.S. imprisonment costs estimated at $82B per year (Eisen, 2023).

Employment is a key part of the societal re-entry process for returning citizens (Patzelt et al., 2014), and reciprocally, successful employees are key enablers of employer and national economic success. Today in the U.S., there are currently eleven million job openings and only six million unemployed (Bhattarai, 2022). In Germany, Europe's largest economy, 1.8 million positions across manufacturing, construction, and service sectors are vacant (Kowalcze, 2023). But labor shortages are not only a skilled labor problem; lower-skilled labor reserves in many emerging economies are also gradually depleting, representing a challenging trend for businesses that might be blunted by the emergence of work-ready returning citizens.

Performance coaching commands a great deal of employer investment, estimated at $4.5B spend in 2022, with approximately 99,000 active professional coaches globally (International Coaching Federation Global Coaching Study: Executive Summary, 2023). Coaching refers to "a comprehensive approach toward development, which aids clients to identify and actively deploy their character strengths as well as acknowledges the multiple contexts which influence their lives" (Van Zyl et al., 2021, p. 2). Although outcomes are difficult to measure, there is a growing body of research evidence that suggests coaching is efficacious regarding aiding behavior change toward goal realization (Theeboom et al., 2014), but there is little understanding of its applicability to the prison context.

Research Question

Fueled by the motivation to address the problem of recidivism among JII in the United States, this research effort worked toward identifying how a coaching approach may foster psychological transformation, such as increasing hope (Snyder et al., 1991; Youssef & Luthans,

2007) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), and shifting identity (Gibson et al., 2023). The research question addressed was: How can coaching programs within United States prisons foster psychological transformation, and increased likelihood of societal reentry success for returning citizens?

Significance of the Research

Returning citizens who participated in a variety of programs, including a cognitive coaching program, within a single U.S. federal prison were identified; the coaching program had shown signs of having successfully built agency and fostered hope, based upon several informal testimonials and archival data. Perhaps most telling was archival records showing that of the 45 individuals who participated in the program from 2011 to 2019 and had been released, only one returned to prison, resulting in a 2% recidivism rate. This was extraordinary when compared with the 68% recidivism rate reported in the literature among returning citizens. The associated conversations with participants and wardens indicated that the program transformed the lives of the inmates and facilitated re-entry into society upon release. This study examined that transformation, aiming to address recidivism by understanding and systematically documenting the transformation process that occurred among the returning citizens, nearly all of whom are currently leading healthy, successful lives characterized by overall wellness. In this context, we define wellness as "emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual well-being" (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2016, p. 3).

Additionally, this work built upon findings regarding the positive identity transformation that occurred among inmates in prior research (Rogers et al., 2017) and will meaningfully contribute to creating hope, sustained employment, and improved lives for returning citizens and

their families. Benefits include identification of practical approaches that have the potential to mitigate direct recidivism costs and address labor shortages, as well as potential implications more broadly for successful implementation of coaching in other contexts.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The research question was informed by literature in three domains: psychological transformation, prison programming, and work re-integration. Psychological transformation is addressed in the organizational behavior literature, and particularly by positive organizational behavior (POB) scholars, including concepts such as psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007), and its subcomponents of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and hope (Cheavens et al., 2019; Snyder et al., 1991). Self-efficacy, hope, and other features of psychological capital are potential mechanisms by which prison-based coaching programs manifest in JII outcomes. They have been extensively empirically explored, with validated measurement scales:

- Psychological Capital (Gorgens-Ekermans & Herbert, 2013; Hernandez et al., 2019; Luthans et al., 2007)
- Self-Efficacy (Sherer et al., 1982)
- Hope (Cheavens et al., 2019; Snyder et al., 1991)

The study of psychological transformation within a prison context appears nascent with few academic articles to be found on the subject (Haesen et al., 2018; Rogers et al., 2017). Still, the few that do exist indicate that transformation in the prison context is possible. One such example is findings regarding the positive (hopeful) identity transformation that occurred among groups of inmates who were given responsible call center jobs with a telemarketing firm while still incarcerated (Rogers et al., 2017).

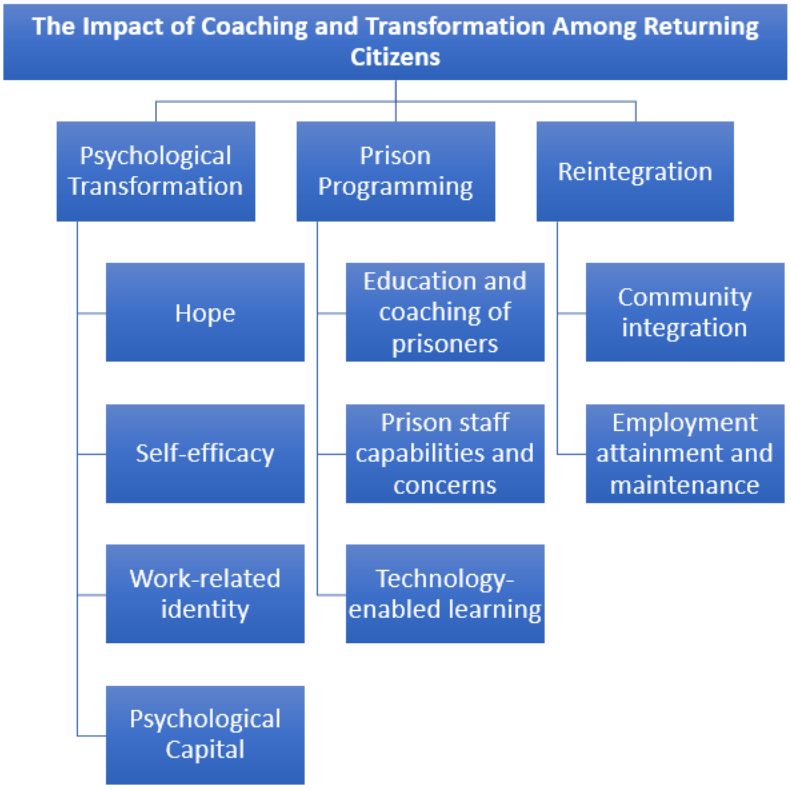
Within the literature on prison programming and re-integration, much has been learned regarding inmate education and vocational skill development (Chappell, 2003). As noted in a 2022 U.S. Department of Justice report, a total of 80 different “Evidence-based Recidivism Reduction Programs” have been implemented in U.S. prisons, addressing content such

vocational training and mental health (Department of Justice, 2022). A table excerpted from the report characterizing these programs may be found in Appendix B. However, few studies have examined the efficacy or impact of these programs, and there is less to be found in the literature specifically regarding the impact of approach to coaching upon inmates' abilities to develop the skills necessary to obtain and maintain employment upon release.

By way of preview and to provide a road map for this review, articles fell broadly into the three major domains: Psychological Transformation, Prison Programming, and Reintegration. Reintegration is defined as the social and economic experiences of a person reentering society after a stay in prison (Morenoff & Harding, 2014). Additionally, sub-categories were developed within each of the major domains as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Literature Map



Method for Developing and Conducting the Systematic Literature Search

Review of the literature began with a non-date bound generalized Google Scholar search of terms and combinations of terms contained in the research question. Given the high volume of related articles produced from this initial Google Scholar search (e.g., 1.9M for employment after prison), a more refined search was performed using Boolean logic, with focus on terms within or related to the research question, specifically: coaching and prison, hope theory and prison, prison and transformation and work, prison education programs and recidivism, and remote education and prison. The refined search was performed using Pepperdine University Library's EBSCO Host portal to search the Academic Search Complete, APA PsycInfo, APA Psyc Articles, Business Source Complete, and ERIC databases.

To further refine the boundaries of the search, focus was given to peer reviewed journal articles published 2000 to present to highlight contemporary learnings regarding institutional coaching and education techniques. As a final step, a supplementary search using the combination of more general terms "prison and identity and work" was conducted for the period 2018-2023 to ensure adequate coverage of recent publications in this broader set of literature. It should also be noted that literature from 1980 to present was nominally searched to capture the developmental pathway of related theories and the historical context of prison programming, adding approximately 20 articles. A summary of the literature search methodology, complete with inclusion and exclusion criteria, is shown in Table 1. The search yielded 204 articles. These were screened using the criteria below, resulting in the deselection of approximately 30%, removing articles related to health coaching, sports coaching, juveniles, and prison environmental factors (e.g., prison architectural design). The final set included 143 articles in this review. Distribution of selected articles across the literature map is shown in Figure 2.

Table 1

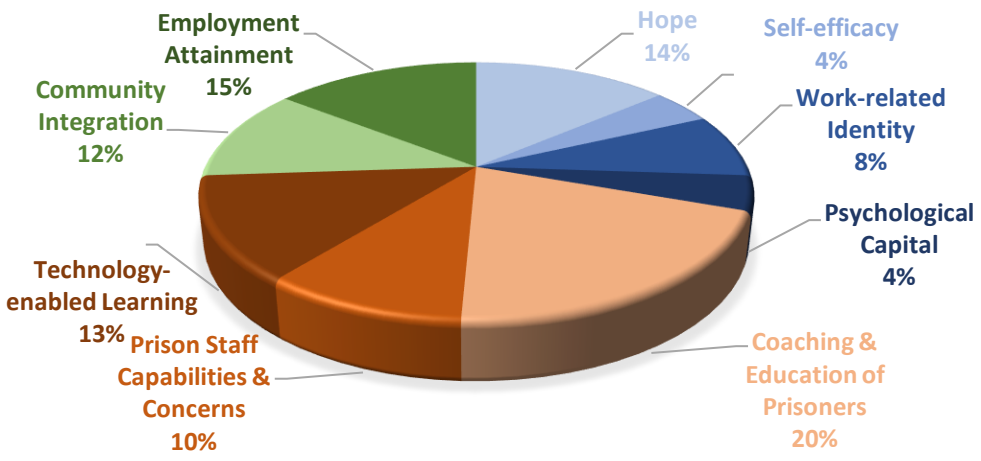
Summary of Literature Search Methodology and Output

Research Question	How can coaching programs within United States prisons foster psychological transformation, and increased likelihood of societal reentry success for returning citizens?
Search Terms for Refined Search	Hope theory and prison, coaching and prison, prison and transformation and identity, prison education programs and recidivism; prison and identity and work (2018 to present),
Inclusion Criteria	Articles published between 1980 – 2023, peer reviewed articles, articles in academic journals, articles written in the English language, quantitative, qualitative, mixed method, meta-analyses, review articles, and conceptual articles
Exclusion Criteria	Articles published outside of the period of 1980 – 2023, non-peer reviewed articles, sources other than academic journals, articles written in languages other than English, health and sports-related coaching articles, articles related to juveniles
Databases Searched	General search – Google Scholar Refined search - Academic Search Complete, APA PsycInfo, APA Psyc Articles, Business Source Complete, and ERIC
Article Counts	Initial Google Scholar search –sample search terms and (count): • Coaching programs (65k) • Creating respect (1k) • Employment after prison (1.9M) • Positive Organizational Behavior (17k) Refined search results (2000 to present): • Coaching and prison – 42 • Hope theory and prison – 6 • Prison education programs and recidivism - 16 • Prison and transformation and identity – 26 • Remote education and prison – 2 • Prison and identity and work (2018-present) – 107 Final set of included articles from refined search: • Psychological Transformation: 44 • Prison Programming: 63 • Reintegration: 36
Selected Article Distribution by Type	Approximate distribution • Case Study – 2% • Conceptual- 18% • Empirical (mixed method) – 7% • Empirical (qualitative) – 22% • Empirical (quantitative) – 35% • Meta Analysis – 6% • Review – 8% • Theory – 1% • Book section – 3%

Figure 2

Article Distribution by Literature Map Category

(Shading: Psychological Transformation = blue; PP = Prison Programming = orange; R = Reintegration=green)



Psychological Transformation

Psychological transformation encompasses metamorphosis and learning from sometimes oppressive and subjugating conditions to empowerment, agency, and the ability to self-govern (Cascio & Luthans, 2014). Although scholars across several disciplines have examined many distinct aspects of transformation, within the management and organizations literature, chief among these are hope (Cheavens et al., 2019; Snyder, 1991), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Sherer et al., 1982), and work-related identity (Ashforth et al., 2008; Gibson et al., 2023). More recently, scholars have developed the more general notion of psychological capital defined as "an individual's positive psychological state of development," (Luthans et al., 2007, p. 542) which is comprised of elements of the other concepts. Each of these will be reviewed as they pertain to the research question, including a total of 44 articles; 43% dealt with hope, 14% with self-efficacy, 30% with work-related identity, and 14% addressed psychological capital more broadly. Among the 44 articles, only eight were found to have direct applicability to the carceral

context (Cascio & Luthans, 2014; Dekhtyar et al., 2012; Haesen et al., 2018; Law & Guo, 2016; Rogers et al., 2017; Toubiana, 2020; Wilson, 2016; Wright et al., 2023). Foundational articles were identified that described the fundamentals of each theory: Hope (Snyder, 1989, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder & Feldman, 2000), Self-Efficacy (Bandura 1977, 2006), work-related identity (Ashforth et al., 2008), and psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007).

Hope

The concept of hope captures one's expectation of goal attainment (Snyder et al., 1991). Hope theory, introduced by Snyder and his colleagues (1991), posits that hope is not an either/or possession that one does or does not have, but that hope exists to varying degrees from person to person. Fundamental to the theory are two activators of hope: Agency (the will to do something) and Pathways (the way forward). The theory puts forward the notion that when individual perceptions of agency exist, along with the presence of a planful pathway, the two (agency and pathways) combine to produce hope (Snyder et al., 1991), increasing the likelihood of goal realization relative to situations where hope does not exist. Thus, the old saying of "where there is a will, there is a way" is only partially correct, because one can imagine cases where an individual has goal-directed agency (the will) but cannot perceive or contrive pathways. Conversely, there may be opportunities (pathways) for individuals to move toward goals, but those individuals possess little or no agency to pursue those pathways.

Snyder et al. (1983) describes the origin of hope theory occurring when he started studying how people make excuses when they make mistakes. During this study of excuse making, he noticed that participants in his studies consistently commented on a desire to realize positive goals. From this he formed the notion of hope being on "the other side of the excusing process" (Snyder, 2002, p. 249). It should be noted that the theory does not necessarily imply

that there is one big goal that is realized through the synergistic effect of agency and pathways, as conceptual arguments associated with the theory imply that there exist multiple pathways along the way that are aimed at achieving smaller goals, which can lead to achievement of larger life goals (Schornick et al., 2023; Snyder, 2002). Further conceptual arguments may be found in the literature that suggest through the continued practice of pursuing these smaller goals a virtuous feedback loop can be created and sustained, consistently keeping hope high and, alternatively, if multiple failures to achieve smaller goals pile up, hope can be lost (Schornick et al., 2023). Additionally, Snyder (2002) described two general types of desirable goals. Type 1 goals are positive in nature and are to be pursued because of their potential for desirable outcomes. Type 2 goals are those that seek to avoid or diminish a potential negative outcome.

Research has applied hope theory to the academic environment (Cheavens et al., 2019; Curry et al., 1997), human service providers (Hellman et al., 2014), trauma sufferers (Laslo-Roth et al., 2022), despair sufferers (Lazarus, 1999), health care facilities (Pavlakou, 2020), and leaders (Peterson & Luthans, 2003). In each case hope was shown to be positively correlated with desired outcomes such as well-being and/or job satisfaction. This broad applicability was captured by meta-analysis of hope theory (Snyder, 2002). Findings showed that hope correlates with superior academic and athletic performance and may contribute to the prevention of physical and psychological health problems and aid psychological adjustment to life changes.

One might expect that hope is difficult to build or maintain in the prison environment where the limitations on freedom and agency may serve as an ever-present reminder of one's shortcomings. At the same time, not all the evidence points to an absence of hope. A qualitative study examined the impact of hope among men (n = 27) and women (n = 6) who were serving reducible life sentences (i.e., those that carry the potential of release) in England and Wales

(Wright et al., 2023). Semi-structured interviews indicated "that hope is possible for individuals who are many years, and even decades, beyond their tariff endpoint [the minimum prison term before going before the parole board], and that their present location (whether open or closed conditions) and temporal orientation to the tariff point mattered less than a progressive trajectory towards eventual release" (Wright et al., 2023, p. 74). Achieving open status from the parole board is a seminal point in a prisoner's progression toward release, representing the point at which prisoners are allowed to leave the prison on a regular basis as a pre-cursor to release. It was the subjective feeling of progression toward release, rather than official parole board status or time left to be served, that amplified hope. Of note, the study found that even for the individuals who were furthest beyond their tariff point, hope persisted among those who saw their imprisonment as a faith-based redemption journey.

Within the carceral environment, the question of hope generation and conveyance is not limited to inmates, as it is also applicable to correctional staff. A quantitative study of the relationship of hope and self-efficacy to job satisfaction among 133 correctional staff within two Taiwanese prisons (one with male and the other with female inmates) found a significant positive relationship between hope and job satisfaction and a significant negative relationship between hope and job stress (Law & Guo, 2016). Additionally, self-efficacy was shown to have a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Hope is also likely related to the experience following release. One study examined 45 returning citizens who were mutual help home residents (Dekhtyar et al., 2012). Help homes are self-governed recovery homes for formerly incarcerated persons with addictions. The study hypothesized and found that the lower the level of hope, the greater the odds of reincarceration. Among the two elements of hope (agency and pathway), only agency predicted these odds

(Dekhtyar et al., 2012). The authors concluded that "those assisting the individuals in their reintegration should consider helping the individual establish a framework of subgoals, which may increase the occurrence and levels of their agentic thoughts" (Dekhtyar et al., 2012, p. 481).

There are those who would argue that hope theory has limitations. Lazarus (1999) suggested that the presence of unsatisfactory life circumstances was necessary for the curation of hope. Snyder (2002) disagreed with this view, arguing that such conditions are simply a subset of those in which hope occurs. Yet, few (4 articles) have applied hope theory to the prison environment, offering an opportunity to further explore and understand the role of hope in this extremely challenging context.

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy, or one's belief in their own capacity to behave in ways that contribute to achieving performance goals (Bandura, 1977), is a component of social cognitive theory. The basic tenant of this theory is reciprocal triadic causation, meaning that an action is the result of three components: personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants (Bandura, 1989). Self-efficacy represents a key personal component, it is a self-generated influence that contributes to determining human action (behavior) as do environmental determinates. In other words, environment is not the only determinate of human behavior, personal human agency also plays a role. Bandura (1989) defined agency as self-generated influences and people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy, and the agency it produces, has the potential to be developed through cognitive coaching in the carceral environment.

Bandura (1977) further argued that self-efficacy results from a combination of experiences (past accomplishments), vicarious experiences (inferences from social comparisons),

verbal persuasion (People are led, through suggestion, into believing they can cope successfully with what has overwhelmed them in the past), and physiological states (one's state of functioning - e.g., anxious, aroused, pp. 197 - 198). Those high in self-efficacy have been demonstrated to set higher goals for themselves and have stronger commitments to those goals (Bandura, 1989).

Additionally, the theory implies that "once established, enhanced self-efficacy tends to generalize to other situations in which performance was self-debilitated by preoccupations with personal inadequacies" (Bandura, 1977, p. 195). This has been demonstrated in several studies, including those addressing the military (Hernandez et al., 2019) and leadership development (Pitichat et al., 2018). Although little work has been conducted on self-efficacy in the prison environment (Wilson, 2016 a notable exception), it holds great promise, in that if self-efficacy toward work skills can be developed and potentially can be transferred to the post-release environment.

Wilson (2016) was a qualitative phenomenological examination of inmates' perceptions of self-efficacy toward conflict resolution, investigating the impact of a course that taught multimodal conflict resolution approaches to inmates, emphasizing emotional intelligence, and appreciative inquiry approaches to human interaction. The study involved semi-structured interviews of a sample of 13 county and state inmates from a single prison in Utah who completed the course. Wilson (2016) found that the acquisition of skills and associated knowledge can catalyze change toward internal transformation. Additionally, the study found that "training inmates in conflict resolution and communications skills such as active listening, emotional intelligence, empathy, impulse control, and assertiveness does affect self-efficacy in conflict resolution and foster change" (Wilson, 2016, p. 163). These findings offered

encouragement that change toward pro-social behavior can be realized through prison-based self-efficacy training.

Work-Related Identity

Work-related identity is a major aspect of one's social identity. Social identity is defined as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1978, p. 63). Ashforth et al. (2008) further elucidate identification as that which "embeds the individual in the relevant identities" (p. 326). Work-related identity thus serves as a sort of glue that binds an individual to an organization.

A meta-analysis addressing work-related identity (i.e., workgroup and organizational attachment) found positive relationships to work satisfaction and willingness to go beyond the formal role definition (Riketta & van Dick, 2005), indicating that the psychological bond between employee and employer is a powerful predictor of behaviors and attitudes related to work. Additionally, dignity conveyance appears to be part of the work-related identity formation process. An insightful recently published review article highlights the identity-establishing, dignity-conveying power of work (Gibson et al., 2023), whereby "the experience of work provides a path forward…dignity is experienced when we are connected and inspired during our work" (p. 218). Through the review, they argue that dignity attainment through employment is an end in and of itself.

Moving to understanding identity within the prison environment, Rogers et al. (2017) examined the positive (hopeful) identity transformation that occurred among inmates who were given responsible call center jobs while incarcerated, giving insight into and evidence of the ability for one to shift (transform) their primary identity from that of prisoner to that of

employee, even while in the carceral environment. They sought to understand how respect accorded to a person by others promotes self-transformation within the organizational context. The setting for the qualitative study was call centers for Televerde, a business-to-business marketing firm situated within state prisons that employs female inmates. These inmate/employees received intensive professional training prior to assuming their assignments and reported to work each workday in their prison clothes. Per correctional authority guidelines, they received raises based upon tenure only and not merit, resulting in intangible recognition being an important part of their reward system.

The study took place over a 15-month period and included Rogers et al. (2017) spending full workdays with the Televerde vice president of operations, touring call centers located in the minimum, medium, and maximum-security areas of a single prison. Formal and informal interviews (n = 92) were conducted with 57 participants including corporate office-based executives (n = 6), managers and/or trainers (n = 12), experienced inmate hires (n = 18), and new inmate hires (n = 21). Archival records, such as mission and vision statements and training materials, were used for triangulation support of findings. The findings included the experiencing of both particularized and generalized respect during new hires' early interactions with Televerde, initiating the transformation process. Particularized respect was defined as providing "worth only for individuals who exhibit—or have the potential to exhibit—certain qualities or actions" (Rogers et al., 2017, p. 222), while generalized respect was treated as the foundational worth ascription due to all members of a group because of their personhood, a concept that overlaps with the notions of dignity mentioned earlier (Gibson et al. 2023). Both forms of respect served to foster a sense of security as identities transitioned from that of primarily inmate to that of Televerde team member and inmate.

The transformative power of obtaining work-related identity was captured throughout the Televerde study interview notes. One participant captured the particularized respect concept by stating, “I started to feel my value. I started to feel that Televerde saw my value and they didn’t see me as just another person on the phone . . . I have to have that. I have to feel that and have the ability to strive beyond normal means” (Rogers et al., 2017, p. 230). Another participant characterized the generalized respect concept with this comment: “...we’re treated with respect and like our opinions count. You know, we can say something and it matters. It makes a difference in here. And that’s a big part of why I like being in here” (p. 230). Adding context to the notion that these comments represent transformation, a manager interviewed in the study estimated that 80 to 90% of the women at Televerde endured abuse and hardship in their pre-incarceration home lives stating, “All they have heard is [that they are a] worthless, good for nothing, piece of crap and so it’s almost like Televerde gives them an opportunity to disprove that; ‘See? I am worthy, I am smart, I am productive’” (Rogers et al., 2017, p. 236). The authors thus concluded that the receiving of respect as Televerde employees provided the opportunity for inmates to redefine themselves in a way that transformed their self-identity from that of an inmate to that of a Televerde team member with skills. This transformation suggests that the respect and training received are conducive to agency formation.

Additionally, a qualitative analysis across 12 Swiss prisons (Haesen et al., 2018) involved interviewing a sample of 35 older prisoners ranging in age from 51 to 75 years. Among the sample, only five were women, and time served ranged from 0.4 to 23.4 years with a mean of six years. All interviews took place in person in prison. Results found that identity as a family member and a friend conveyed a sense of belonging. One participant stated, “My family, my children, I do not want to live without my family, without my children, definitely not. My family

is my children. Yes, I'm so proud of them. Now I'm a grandmother with five grandchildren" (Haesen et al., 2018, p. 202). Another participant offered the following regarding the support friends provided in lieu of family, "Yes, my friends. I don't have a family. In my case, the whole family is murderer and manslaughter. My mother was [X years old] when she had me, and when she was [X years old], the old man shot her. And my brother hung himself" (p. 202). The notion of being "irreplaceably needed" was a powerful motivator of change, such as in the case of one participant who stated, "I think once I have completed this I never want to go to prison again, never. Because now my daughter needs me, my wife needs me, my children need me, right. And as long as I live, I really want to devote myself to my family" (Haesen et al., 2018, p. 203).

This study also showed occupational identity and professional pride manifesting both from occupations inmates held before entering prison (e.g., painters, cooks, accountants) and those they held while in prison. One participant stated, "When I was in prison X, I painted a lot, many persons; I made portraits of their wives, their children, their mom or dad. So, um, I was paid a bit through that. Many people asked me, I had to turn some down because – because it's a lot of work for me" (Haesen et al., 2018, p. 204). In addition to creating a daily routine that brought equilibrium to life on the inside, application of professional skills contributed to identity formation "associated with being needed and appreciated" (Haesen et al., 2018, p. 206).

As a deterrent to recidivism, inherent to answering the research question was to understand whether there existed coaching approaches that could be applied to improve the likelihood of returning citizens enjoying the respect and dignity that may come with having job-related identity. A key consideration was that of how one forms a work-related identity upon release from prison. A qualitative study within the Canadian corrections system explored the process of institutional deidentification upon release from prison (Toubiana, 2020). The study

method involved interviewing 43 formerly incarcerated persons and the use of archival documents from various departments within the Canadian corrections system as supporting cross-references. All interviewees were in transition from prison and attempting to reintegrate into society. Within the model developed from the study, upon release, returning citizens experienced a transition phase that was highly impactful regarding their ability to disentangle from their prison-based institutional identity and take on a post-release identity. A fundamental finding was that returning citizens needed "identity material," representing narratives and understandings that are the substance of the story of oneself, to support them in their reidentification journey, and that current rehabilitation programs do little to foster formation of this material. Such identity material formation stands in contrast to the rehabilitative logic that is predominately used in prisons, which fosters a sense of victimhood. When the victim identity is carried into the post release transition environment, it serves to debilitate (paralyze) returning citizens regarding their ability to take on a new identity because they lack the identity material to exercise agency, effectively thinking of themselves as victims who are no longer in prison rather than returning citizens who can make decisions. This finding supports the notion that coaching approaches that engender a sense of agency within prisoners have the potential to aid post-release identity formation, inclusive of the ability to seek, find, and hold a job.

Psychological Capital

The concept of psychological capital was pioneered by Luthans (2007). It is comprised of four elements (i.e., hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism) resulting in the acronym HERO and a focus on the hero within (Luthans et al, 2019). Luthans et al. (2007) also characterized psychological capital as:

> (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success. (p. 542)

Psychological capital has been studied and measured across multiple environments including Spanish military personnel (Hernandez et al., 2019), service and high technology sectors (Luthans et al., 2007), academic environments (Luthans et al., 2019), and organizational leaders (Pitichat et al., 2018), in each case showing indications of the predictive power of psychological capital as positively related to job satisfaction and the ability to persevere in the face of challenges. For example, within the Spanish military, psychological capital was shown to be significantly correlated with health self-perception and psychological well-being, suggesting that programs administered with the aim of enhancing psychological capital may be beneficial to the well-being of military personnel (Hernandez et al., 2019). Additionally, within the academic environment, a quantitative study of 176 business students showed that psychological capital serves a mediating role relative to the relationship between grit (one's ability to persevere in pursuit of goals) and grade point averages (Luthans et al., 2019). Within leadership ranks, a quantitative study of 120 leaders, using a survey approach, found that psychological capital contributed to the ability of leaders to maintain elevated levels of motivation to develop, which is a necessary part of leadership (Pitichat et al., 2018).

Studies in this domain indicate that a mechanism by which prison coaching techniques may enhance job prospects for returning citizens is through the enablement of psychological capital. For example, a retrospective qualitative study of the revolutionary transformation among

Nelson Mandela and his fellow political prisoners incarcerated at Robben Island prison in the mid-1960's argued that "the political prisoners, and especially their leaders, disrupted the institution and drew from and exhibited psychological capital" (Cascio & Luthans, 2014, p. 65). The research method included a visit to the prison, interviews with former prisoners, and reading firsthand accounts of former prisoners and their guards. Findings showed that even in oppressive conditions metamorphosis can occur within individuals and organizations when they feel that "they are in control of their actions, and that they can self-govern; when they are responsible; believe that they can prevail (i.e., through hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism)" (Cascio & Luthans, 2014, p. 65). These findings suggest that coaching which encourages such self-control and governance can prompt attitudinal transformation in the carceral environment.

Summary of Gaps and Deficiencies in the Psychological Transformation Literature

Summarizing across the literature in this first domain of psychological transformation, a sense of personal agency appears critical. Although there is little scholarly treatment of the intentional development, recognition, and ownership of agency among JII while in the carceral environment, the work that does exist offers support for the power of a sense of agency upon release in aiding returning citizens toward navigating the post release environment. In particular, the findings regarding the predictive power of agency relative to recidivism likelihood (Dekhtyar et al., 2012) warrant further exploration. Agency is fundamental to the curation of hope (Snyder et al., 1991), and the power of hope within the carceral environment for both inmates and correctional staff has been highlighted within the literature. In the former (Wright et al., 2023), the creation of hope was shown to be possible even within inmates who were far past (e.g., decades) their potential release dates, and in the latter (Law & Guao, 2016), hope was shown to increase correctional staff job satisfaction and reduce stress.

Yet, despite these powerful indicators, little additional scholarly work can be found in the literature regarding the application of theories related to psychological transformation within the carceral environment. Based upon the findings in the limited papers that do exist, exploration of the potential of agency curation among inmates should be further explored. It is unclear why more studies have not been done in the carceral context given the breadth of study of non-carceral applications of hope theory, self-efficacy, and psychological capital.

The Robben Island (Cascio & Luthans, 2014) study was a particularly powerful demonstration of the exercise of agency, hope, and self-efficacy. However, this study was done post-hoc, and there was no evidence that there was intentional curation of that agency by correctional staff. Given the conditions surrounding apartheid, it is possible that the opposite of agency curation was intended by those who put Nelson Mandela in prison, which would suggest that Mr. Mandela potentially possessed high levels of agency prior to incarceration, and the Robben Island transformation coupled with Mr. Mandela's ascension to the presidency of South Africa would support that notion. But this is not typically the case with many of those who are incarcerated.

Apart from the possibility of possessing hope prior to prison, the findings reviewed regarding the ability to train inmates in conflict resolution show that hope, agency, self-efficacy, and identity can be developed while incarcerated (Wilson, 2016), further bolstered by the transformational experiences of inmates employed by Televerde (Rogers et al., 2017). The curation of hope through agency has the potential to lead to maintenance of employment, and post-release dignity formation (Gibson et al., 2023). Yet, there seems to be little in the literature regarding such curation efforts using coaching, representing a gap that if filled may serve to

reduce recidivism by moving returning citizens from a prison-based victim identity (Toubiana, 2020), where little agency exists, to a post-release identity as a team member of a company.

Prison Programming

Exploration of the impact of programming during the prison experience that impacts return citizens' development and preparation for life outside of prison was fundamental to the research question. Flowing from the literature searches, a total of 63 articles were selected within the Prison Programming category related to the research question. Among the articles, 45% addressed education and coaching of prisoners, 22% dealt with prison staff capabilities and concerns, and 33% with technology-enabled learning.

Education and Coaching of Prisoners

Areas of prison programming and education treated within the literature cover a broad range, such as college level (higher) education programs (Conway, 2020, 2023; Duguid et al., 1996; Esperian, 2010; Kim & Clark, 2013), entrepreneurship education (Grosholz et al., 2020; Patzelt et al., 2014), fatherhood education (Henson, 2018), listening skill development (Perrin & Blagden, 2014), music making (Anderson & Willingham, 2020), and storytelling (Bhandari, 2018). One study showed that a large majority (87%) of Federal adult prison facilities had such educational programs, with half of those facilities having vocational education programs (Stephan, 1997).

There is scholarly evidence to support the efficacy of these prison-based education programs. A qualitative study of 21 returning citizens who participated in the Boston University Prison Education Program (Conway, 2023) showed participants saw the program as a means of finding community while also developing the skills necessary to learn grow, and explore their own interests, thereby helping them break free of the figurative psychological shackles

associated with inherent agency limits while in prison. As one female participant in the study noted, “To make a human life in prison, that is the task” (Conway, 2023, p. 25). Prison based higher education programs were found to contribute toward making a life. Although this study did not examine coaching per say, the fact that education more broadly was impactful, supports the importance of agency development while in prison as an aid toward post-release well-being.

Likewise, a quantitative study of 654 returning citizens from Canadian prisons (Duguid & Pawson, 1998) showed 75% of those who had participated in a prison-based liberal arts education had remained free from incarceration after release when compared to the predicted Canadian federal system reincarceration rate of 50%. When exploring self-selection bias influence upon program participation, findings showed that self-selection was a major contributor to the initial decision to participate in a given program while also impacting the multiple subsequent decisions associated with continuing to participate until completion. Duguid and Pawson (1998) concluded, “it is not the programs that work, but their capacity to offer resources that allow participants the choice of making them work” (p. 492). Thus, an elevated (relative to other inmates) sense of agency may have been preexisting in those who chose to participate and complete. A quantitative study by Kim and Clark (2013) showed that the three-year post-release recidivism rate among college program completers was about half that of non-completers, but that self-selection bias may have affected these results. The exercise of agency is likely to be an important contributor to making choices that reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

While work skill education programs conducted within the prison context are abundant (Wilson et al., 2000), at least one scholar reviewing the literature on employment and crime rates, concluded that despite much advocacy for employment-based solutions to crime, evidence supporting the efficacy of such efforts was not convincing (Piehl, 1998). A quantitative study

using data from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies Prison Study found with respect to basic skills education and GED preparation programs, “the proportion of adults completing these programs and gaining credentials is even lower than a decade earlier and continues to need improvement” (Patterson, 2019, p. 20). Thus, the question arises as to what may be missing within these training programs.

Less research has examined coaching programs more specifically. Coaching involves partnering with clients in a process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential (coaching-online.org, 2023). Coaching is an investment in the development of another’s ability to exercise agency and operate successfully in the context of community. In the coaching literature, polar forms of coaching technique may be found, ranging from the facilitative (praise, learn, positive outcome focused) to the pressure-based (criticism, force, negative outcome avoidance), with the former being found superior with respect to producing commitment and results (Sue-Chan et al., 2012; Weer et al., 2016). The application of these coaching techniques can fall across a broad spectrum of coaching types such as life coaching, group coaching, leader as coach, and one-on-one leadership development (Ely et al., 2010). However, fundamental theory development in the space appears anemic (Theeboom et al., 2014). Cognitive based approaches to coaching (cognitive behavioral coaching) are a subset of the literature focusing on helping “clients to identify, examine, and alter self-defeating thoughts and beliefs, build up productive behaviors, and become more skilled at managing their emotions” (Eseadi et al., 2018, p. 1591).

In terms of the efficacy of coaching, a foundational meta-analysis (Theeboom et al., 2014) employing quantitative techniques across 18 studies covering the period of 1993 to 2012, showed that coaching is significantly positively related to individual level outcomes of

performance, skills, well-being, coping, work attitudes, and goal-directed self-regulation. Yet, "whereas coaching is very popular as a management tool and organizations are apparently willing to pay large amounts of money for it, an empirical review of coaching effectiveness is lagging" (Theeboom et al., 2014, p. 1).

Two important exemplars in this regard are worth noting. One longitudinal qualitative study (Weer et al., 2016), conducted over a 54-month period among 714 managers and their teams, supported the potential power and form of cognitive coaching. The authors found that facilitative coaching (praise and seeking opportunities for learning) increased team commitment and effectiveness as contrasted to pressure-based coaching (complaints, criticism, and force), which negatively impacted team commitment and effectiveness. Increasing the skills necessary for team effectiveness could presumably contribute to pro-social behavior in the post-release environment. Similarly, a quantitative study of the impact of coaching was conducted among a sample 249 Malaysian assembly line employees at a factory that produces mobility solutions for a Fortune 500 company (Sue-Chan et al., 2012). The factory was chosen because the practitioner literature had described it as an exemplar regarding developing supervisors who were adept at coaching their teams. The approach measured employees' perceptions of their supervisors' coaching orientation and showed that promotion-oriented coaching (emphasizing successes and their pursuit) had a more positive impact on the performance of employees versus the use of prevention-oriented coaching (emphasizing the prevention of failure).

Turning to the prison context more specifically, most articles related to prison-based coaching dealt with issues tangential to cognition and employment-related behavior, focusing instead on sports or physical health, which is illustrative of a gap in the literature. Only two studies examined coaching programs exclusively directed toward impacting inmates' behavioral

performance (Eseadi et al., 2018; Shelton et al., 2009). The first was a quantitative study of 30 male inmates within Enugu State, Nigeria (Eseadi et al., 2018). Participants were selected based on manifesting severe depression and were randomly assigned to either a control group or a treatment group, and the assignment sequence was hidden from the participants and prison officers to avoid selection bias. Both groups took part in 12 sessions of 50 minutes in duration, occurring twice weekly over a six-week period. The treatment group received cognitive behavioral coaching, and the control group received conventional counseling that was not grounded in any theory. The cognitive coaching program included use of rational-emotive behavior therapy (REBT) and the associated ABCDE model whereby, the "A" stands for activating event, "B" stands for beliefs, "C" stands for consequences, "D" stands for disputation, and "E" stands for the effective and rational beliefs that will occur because of disputation (Eseadi et al, 2017). Pretests for depression were given to each participant in the two groups prior to the intervention and again three months after completion of their respective regimens, representing a pre-test/post-test control group design. The results indicated that group-focused cognitive-behavioral coaching reduced symptoms of depression compared to conventional counseling.

Additionally, a quantitative study of 45 men and 18 women was conducted within three Connecticut state prisons (Shelton et al., 2009). Participants were selected based upon having displayed impulsive behavior problems as observed by correctional institution leadership and correctional institution mental health professionals. Participants attended a structured 16-week dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) program. DBT is a version of cognitive behavioral therapy that encourages individuals to accept their current selves with the aim of changing future behavior. The results showed that the systematic application of behavioral coaching over a 16-week period produced significant reduction in aggression and impulsivity.

Although the body of research on prison-based cognitive coaching is nascent, these two studies suggested that there was much to be learned and applied toward behavior (and potentially identity) transformation within the carceral environment. Finally, McGregor (2015) reported case studies that gave insight into what it is like to provide behavioral and cognitive coaching inside a women's prison and offered potential insight into how coaching can help build hope among incarcerated women. Although the stories included offer hope that coaching can be transformative among women in prison, a more scholarly and rigorous treatment of the methods and suggested findings is necessary to build confidence in their veracity.

Prison Staff Capabilities and Concerns

Among prison staff within the carceral environment, correctional officers (COs) interact with inmates extensively. The job of the CO is to be responsible for the security, care and supervision of inmates at all times and in all places (CorrectionalOfficerEDU.org, n.d.), representing the lowest level of non-prisoner authority within the prison management system. Thus, CO capabilities and concerns are considered within this review, given the inherent leadership influence role COs play in inmates' lives. To ensure a supportive ecosystem for effective coaching within the carceral environment, the involvement and active partnership of COs is necessary. Thus, it was important to understand the challenges they faced. Multiple articles exploring the high stress/high conflict nature of COs' roles and the human toll such roles exact upon the health (physical and emotional) of those who hold them were identified (Cheek & Miller, 1983; Damsa, 2023; Garrihy, 2022: Namazi et al., 2021; Talbot-Landon et al., 2007; Vickovic & Morrow, 2020).

For example, a quantitative study of 143 New Jersey COs involving largely males (Cheek & Miller, 1983) showed a propensity to project a macho image (e.g., aggressive, showing

attraction to sensation seeking, tension, and danger) despite being under intense emotional stress. Respondents willingly identified peers' stress but were reluctant to identify their own. Additionally, they reported CO-inmate conflict as their primary source of stress. Another qualitative study (Compton & Brandhorst, 2021) involved interviews with 26 federal COs (18 males and 8 females) who had a range of one to 26 years of work experience and ranged in age from 27 to 62 years. Semi structured narrative interview questions were used to lift learnings regarding how COs perceive and negotiate their identities at work. The study highlighted the additional stressors experienced by female COs stemming from the professional CO ideal being more strongly associated with masculinity. External perceptions of the CO job are also a challenge, as noted in a mixed empirical study of 69 Irish Prison Service COs, ranging in rank from prison officer to prison governor, across four medium security prisons (2 male-only and 2 female-only) (Garrihy, 2022). Semi-structured interviews uncovered CO's concerns regarding perceptions that they are 'psychologically dirty' due to the nature of their jobs.

Given the high stress but also the high impact nature of CO roles, the literature also addresses programs aimed toward CO professional development (Damsa, 2023; Jaspers et al., 2022). COs daily face the potential for violence. Dasma (2023) investigated violence prevention techniques, using qualitative methodology. The author examined the experiences among eight Danish prison and probations services personnel and found that CO's perceived punitive policies as increasingly becoming the norm while approaches aimed toward rehabilitation were slipping. COs held negative perceptions of the impact of these changes upon CO professionalism, yet most remained committed to treating prisoners humanely despite these headwinds. Dasma (2023) notes that promotion of a positive culture as a deterrent to violence has often been neglected in

the literature, underscoring the importance of examining coaching as a means of improving the cultural mindset within prisons.

Cognitive coaching for both COs and inmates has the potential to reduce stress at the inmate/CO relationship interface, but as suggested by others (Talbot-Landon, 2007), this area is underexplored and in need of study. Only two studies directly addressed the cognitive coaching of probation and parole officers. The first used the validated Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI), which assesses how closely correctional psychological treatment programs adhere to known best practices for treatment (Labrecque et al., 2013). Among a sample of 44 COs, the study found that training was effective in improving officers' behavioral performance in the areas of anticriminal modeling, effective disapproval, problem solving, structured learning, cognitive restructuring, and relationship skills, representing improvement in five of eight CPAI service delivery skills. Thus, there is evidence that training and coaching can be impactful in terms of better equipping probation and parole officers to constructively interface with inmates.

Labrecque and Smith (2017) reports results of a qualitative 18-month longitudinal study that explored the impact of initial training, followed by monthly coaching sessions, on 43 officers' use of six core correctional practices (CCPs), which include "anticriminal modeling, effective disapproval, problem solving, structured learning, cognitive restructuring, and relationship skills" (p. 241). They noted, "given that the extant research suggests that the effective officer use of CCPs is significantly related to offender recidivism, the potential role that coaching may play in increasing the officer use of these skills is monumental" (Labrecque & Smith, 2017, p. 238), shedding a glimmer of light into the notion that coaching can positively impact prison staff and inmates in ways that have the potential to reduce recidivism.

Technology-enabled Learning

When considering the inherent physical access constraints associated with the carceral environment, understanding how the advent of Information Communications Technology (ICT) enabled tools, which have transformed the way education is delivered (Ali et al., 2020), might benefit inmates and correctional officers was relevant to the research question. Most research has highlighted the effectiveness of remotely delivered education (Carswell et al., 2000; Ermeling et al., 2015; Smith & Hamilton, 2015; Zhang & Nunamaker, 2003), while others suggested that over reliance on virtual delivery has the potential to exacerbate the social divide (Goudeau et al., 2021; Jefferson & Moore, 1990).

The unplanned experiment in virtual delivery of education experienced through the COVID-19 lockdowns and associated limitations on in person human interaction in educational settings has provided deeper insight into the impacts of virtually delivered educational content. For example, a systematic review of 45 peer-reviewed studies examining virtual education during COVID-19 (del Socorro Torres-Caceres et al., 2022) concluded that ICT-delivered teaching and tutoring was generally favorably adopted by students and that teachers should consciously work to enhance their ICT skills while modifying their pedagogical approaches to accommodate what is effectively a now compulsory element of education delivery. Findings suggested that students' perceived ICT-enabled learnings included making more efficient use of time while content quality remained comparable to that of conventional in-classroom approaches. However, loss of in person face-to-face interaction, loss of a blackboard for use in answering questions, and unstable internet connections were noted as negatives.

Likewise, an Ireland-based qualitative study conducted from March to July of 2021 (Kyne & Barrett, 2023), looking at ICT-enabled delivery of undergraduate general practice

medical courses involved semi-structured online interviews across three university programs. The study surfaced concerns regarding negative impacts on the psychological well-being of students and staff resulting from lack of social interaction. The study only had nine participants and all were faculty. More research is needed to advance understanding of these findings, inclusive of learner perspectives, but the study provides a clue as to the criticality of some level of in person interaction to promote psychological well-being within the instructional ecosystem.

Regarding coaching, one mixed methods study of remotely delivered coaching for school administrators and teachers compared efficacy of exclusive face-to-face in-person coaching with a blended model (Ermeling et al., 2015). In the blended model administrators received a mix of in person and virtual coaching, while teachers received only virtual coaching. The study found that the blended approach was "an adequate and cost-effective substitute for traditional face-to-face coaching" (Ermeling et al., 2015, p. 1). Additionally, the full coaching load in the traditional model was borne by the coach, whereas in the blended model principals took on part of the coaching role. Perhaps this blended model has applicability to correctional institutions, whereby blended delivery to COs and exclusively virtual delivery to inmates could overcome physical security constraints, resulting in delivery of effective coaching to both, while enhancing the coaching skills of COs.

Although little was found in the scholarly literature regarding virtual delivery of coaching in the prison environment, one case study of a 25-year-old male prisoner (Andreas) who suffered from impulse control disorder explored how remotely delivered mathematical education via an asynchronous internet forum had the potential to aid individuals who are disadvantaged due to psychological or social influencers (Ahl et al., 2017). Learnings from the study indicated that the asynchronous approach served to mute impulsive/aggressive behavior, as the built-in delay

allowed time for thought and a reflective rather than reflexive approach; it also reduced "impulsive and unmediated" (Ahl et al., 2017, p. 31) emotions. The ICT-enabled asynchronous approach was shown to be effective in advancing Andreas' mathematical knowledge (inclusive of calculus). It also helped to overcome inherent physical security concerns and reduce costs. In some cases, the mode may be better than a face-to-face approach, in that reflexive and impulsive responses are allayed, thereby aiding learning.

A concern associated with the use of virtually delivered content within prisons is the potential for misuse of the ICT systems. For example, ICT systems without proper limitations could enable continued criminal activity or serve to facilitate the continuance of relationships that are not conducive to rehabilitation. A conceptual paper addressing this subject, while noting the obvious cost efficiencies associated with remote delivery relative to in person, highlights the emergence of new software and hardware that reduce the misuse risk (Sellers, 2016).

Summary of Gaps and Deficiencies in the Prison Programming Literature

The literature search yielded only three studies specifically regarding cognitive coaching programs in prison (i.e., Eseadi et al., 2018; McGregor, 2015; Shelton et al., 2009). Findings from these studies suggested that cognitive behavioral coaching significantly reduced depression, aggression, and impulsivity as movements toward transformation. The presence of the option to exercise any sort of agency toward education (even if those options were highly limited) was found to be helpful in breaking free of agency-minimizing psychological shackles (Conway, 2023), begging the question of how agency can be enhanced in the carceral environment. An additional article was identified that dealt with coaching of COs, finding that officer coaching may increase officer skill and reduce recidivism. Still, based upon sparse scholarly literature,

coaching programs that are abundant in non-carceral institutions (Theeboom, 2014) were found to be understudied within prisons.

The use of ICT-enabled tools within the prison environment appeared less prevalent than general societal use. There is a balance to strike between the advantages offered by such tools, such as their ability to ease face-to-face physical security access constraints, with the potential of their misuse. Only one article (Ahl et al., 2017) was identified regarding the use of ICT tools to deliver cognitive coaching within prison, revealing that asynchronous delivery of coaching and educational content via internet muted impulsive and reflexive reactions, allowing time for comprehension and mastery of content. Still, despite these findings, educational offerings within prisons are largely a traditional set of fixed vocational skill development options, offering little room for exercise of inmate agency or personal career interest development.

Reintegration

The aim of this research was to reduce recidivism while enhancing quality of life for returning citizens. Therefore, understanding the factors that influence the quality of reentry into society was necessary to have a complete understanding of the reentry interface ecosystem (prison existence and the transition into larger society) across which life skills developed through cognitive coaching would be applied. From the literature, a total of 36 articles were selected within the Reintegration category related to the research question. Among the selected articles, 44% addressed community integration and 56% addressed employment attainment and maintenance.

Community Integration

Articles selected related to community integration upon return from prison addressed the stigma returning citizens face upon entering the community as ex-convicts (Enosh et al., 2013;

Morenoff & Harding, 2014); temptations associated with old patterns of thinking that contributed to being incarcerated, including substance abuse (Enosh et al., 2013; Morenoff & Harding, 2014; Nyamathi et al., 2015); the criticality of supportive relationships to ease the transition back into society (Kenemore & In, 2020; Thomas et al., 2019); family relationships (Shortt et al., 2014; Western & Wildeman, 2009); physical health care (Nyamathi et al., 2016); the effectiveness of volunteers within faith-based organizations toward reducing recidivism and how religion impacts returning citizens' likelihood to recidivate (Johnson, 2021; Stansfield et al., 2019); and post-release sexual activity (Nyamathi et al., 2016).

Regarding community sigma associated with a formerly incarcerated person's return, an Israel-based qualitative study of community reaction to returning citizens (Enosh et al., 2013) revealed both general stigma (where the returning citizen was not personally known by community members) and personal stigma (where the returning citizen was known by community members). These stigma types resulted in feelings of loneliness, anger, rejection, shame, and anxiety (Enosh et al., 2013). Additionally, "self- esteem is threatened and they find themselves helpless in the face of such denigrating mirrors" (Enosh et al., 2013, p. 931). Denigrating mirrors refers to the reflection returning citizens see of themselves as they interface with the public as well as those in their intimate relationship circles. Thus, it is easy to see how a kind of helpless paralysis could claw away at any positive balance in the agency bank account that may have been built through prison programming.

When reentering society, old temptations and patterns of behavior that were not available in prison become options while returning citizens go through what is often a struggle to secure safe and affordable housing (Keene et al., 2018). Morenoff and Harding (2014) examined how neighborhoods impact the experience of returning citizens, indicating a degenerative cycle

whereby returning citizens often enter neighborhoods that are already socioeconomically weak, with high rates of crime. They enter these neighborhoods because these are often the only locations where housing can be found (either directly subsidized or through living with family members). The temptations present in these neighborhoods enhance the likelihood of recidivism.

Supportive relationships have been shown to be vital parts of successful reentry. A qualitative study of a sample of 45 returning citizens within a large midwestern U.S. city (Kenmore & In, 2020) found that the presence of supportive relationships during the reentry process can serve to solidify a new identity for the returning citizen, thereby reducing the likelihood of engaging in behaviors that lead to recidivism. Supportive relationships were characterized as mentor-like, respectful, attentive, and challenging toward notions that created a narrative of failure within the minds of returning citizens. It is reasonable to ask whether these relationships serve as a form of coaching that helps the returning citizen have hope that a new future with a non-offender identity is possible; a notion supported by the authors: "the findings suggest that the mentoring relationships established were highly valued as confirming and empowering during the reentry transition" (Kenmore & In, 2020, p. 328).

In addition to supportive relationships, the role of religion in returning citizens' post-release existence appears to hold powerful potential for blunting recidivistic behavior. Johnson (2021) looked at the impact of faith-based individuals and organizations upon crime reduction concluded that "preliminary research into offender-led religious movements suggests that these movements may be a key factor in rethinking some of our approaches to correctional programs and rehabilitation" (p. 7). Johnson (2021) argued that offender-led religious movements have the potential to foster identity transformation, making both prisons and reentry communities safer. However, one qualitative study of Oregon-based returning citizens documented that religiosity

was associated with a greater likelihood of rearrest (Stansfield et al., 2019), suggesting the relationship is more complex. Thus, one application of these learnings for consideration would be the need to understand if the incorporation of religiosity into coaching programs may be a means of fostering sustained transformation, potentially leading to higher rates of successful reintegration of returning citizens.

Employment Attainment and Maintenance

Employment realization soon after release from prison plays a vital role in successful reintegration (Patzelt et al., 2014; Visher et al., 2011). Articles selected related to employment attainment after release highlighted the challenges returning citizens face when seeking employment, particularly the stigma associated with being an ex-offender (Lindsay, 2022; Ricciardelli & Mooney; 2018; Sugie, 2018; Turner, 2013; Western et al., 2001), inherent barriers presented within employers' hiring systems (Goodstein, 2019), impact of prison-based career development program participation upon post-release employment prospects (Bennett & Amundson, 2016; Sedgley et al., 2010; Visher et al., 2011), and the greater challenges faced by Black and Hispanic returning citizens as compared to Whites (Western & Sirois, 2019).

A seminal longitudinal quantitative study of 1200 former prisoners (Visher et al., 2011) exiting Illinois, Ohio, and Texas prisons examined the factors which affect likelihood of employment attainment upon release. The study found that pre-incarceration work experience, pre-release employer contact, and presence of family relationships (spouse and/or children) positively impact attainment of employment, while drug use relapse, chronic health issues (physical or mental), nonwhite race, and being older were found to be negatively related to attainment. Visher et al. (2011) not only rigorously and quantitatively identified the factors that impact employment likelihood upon release, but offered practical actions that can be undertaken

to increase likelihood of post-release employment such as obtaining a prison job prior to release, taking care of physical and mental health prior to release, inclusive of developing a hopeful attitude, acquiring photo identification after release, and abstaining from illegal drug use.

A similar longitudinal mixed methods study of 122 men and women released from Massachusetts prisons explored factors affecting job attainment for returning citizens (Western & Sirois, 2019). Analysis of the data collected showed that Black people and Hispanics were significantly disadvantaged relative to other returning citizens in their attempts to attain employment. As an example, 30% of Whites found work through social networks, compared to just 8% of Black people. Although analysis of the data collected appears rigorous in terms of validating the disparity, Western and Sirois (2019) do little in the way of offering practical steps toward addressing it.

The stigma associated with being an ex-offender produces a significant headwind to employment prospects for returning citizens. A longitudinal qualitative study of 25 male and female returning citizens over a three-year period (Ricciardelli & Mooney, 2018) found that in the period soon after release, returning citizen jobseekers tended to preemptively disclose their criminal history and were unsettled by this history as they participated in job interviews. They also found that employers were hesitant to hire returning citizens. With the passage of time, returning citizens who did not recidivate began to dissociate with their carceral identities and developed more nuanced and less aggressive condition-specific telling disclosure strategies, as preemptive disclosure typically resulted in the closing off a given job opportunity. Likewise, a qualitative study of 50 returning citizens in Ohio (Lindsay, 2022) explored the impact of prison credentials (certified skills or work experiences obtained in prison) upon the employment process. The study found that returning citizens often hid their criminal past in a job application

and then used the live interview as a way of bringing forward their redemptive story through describing their prison credentialing journey as evidence of their changed approach to life.

The job search for returning citizens is a chaotic process, as highlighted in a quantitative study of 133 men recently released from prison that presented the post-release job seeking process as foraging (Sugie, 2018), emphasizing the precarious process of seeking and taking on a wide variety of job types to find sufficient work to make a living. The study investigated job search patterns as they unfolded over time through twice daily distribution of surveys to smart phones the men were issued upon release. These surveys inquired about things such as whether the person was working, and if so, were they working for pay. The results of the study revealed a mentally taxing foraging process that may worsen mental health and the ability to be involved in family life, potentially exacerbating an already inherently challenging post-release experience.

Structural barriers exist also among employers regarding intentionally filtering persons with a criminal record from the prospective hiring pool. A conceptual paper studying these barriers notes the criminal record question on job applications as a basic example (Goodstein, 2019). Also noted is the existence of jurisdictional (federal and state) licensing laws that restrict or prevent certain types of professional opportunities for formerly incarcerated persons. Goodstein indicates that 700,000 people reenter society from U.S. state and federal prisons each year and argues that employers must develop structures to aid in the hiring and retaining of formerly incarcerated persons, suggesting that the associated gratitude for being hired will engender a strong work ethic. However, Goodstein (2019) falls short of offering practical methods for employers to use to reduce the risk of a problem hire, highlighting the need for action research in this area.

Bennett and Amundsom (2016) conducted a review exploring reentry transition and offered potential interventional pathways that might enhance returning citizens' job prospects. This included involving them in career choice-making (a form of agency) while cultivating curiosity and hope. The notion here is a bit contrarian to the typical vocational education approaches put forward with traditional prison programming, but very much in line with the notion that the fostering of agency and hope have the potential to equip returning citizens to overcome inherent post-release barriers to employment. Ultimately, the authors call for correctional institutions to embrace a more dynamic form of career development. Rather than prescribing a limited set of vocational development pathways (e.g., fork truck driving), prisoners should be engaged in the career development process to understand their own interests and gifts, and these could then be developed while in prison, thereby allowing the exercising of agency and creating hope for pursuing their chosen occupation. While this suggested approach appears to have the potential to enhance post-release employment success, the financial implications for prison systems were not addressed. Perhaps such career development sense-making could be aided by coaching.

Summary of Gaps and Deficiencies in the Reintegration Literature

The literature highlights the challenging transition for returning citizens as they seek to decouple from their prison identities to form their post-release identities. The challenges of securing work, as well as safe and affordable housing, while overcoming the stigma of being an ex-offender are palpable. The literature selected for this review covered the nature of these issues. While understanding the nature of these challenges is a major step toward identifying solutions, the literature seemed more focused on describing and understanding than offering practical programs or policies. The papers that did offer practical solutions to reducing

recidivism likelihood upon reentry focused on the vital role religion and supportive relationships can play in reducing recidivism. Additionally, the presence of agency and transformed self-identity, leaving behind the former criminal identity, were identified as potential antidotes returning citizens could deploy against temptations that may be present in the neighborhoods to which they return.

Goodstein (2019), Lindsay (2022), Ricciardelli & Mooney(2018), Sugie (2018), Turner(2013), and Western et al. (2001) described the challenges associated with the lived experiences of returning citizen job seekers. Yet, scholars in this domain could have gone further with respect to offering insight into which strategies used by participants appeared most efficacious toward obtaining employment. Although Lindsay (2022) did offer some potential policy adjustments that could be helpful, and Sugie (2018) provided descriptive statistics regarding job search times and types, neither recommend preferred strategies for returning citizens. Doing so would have made the research more useful, particularly for addressing the mindset of returning citizens during the job search process.

Similarly, Visher et al. (2011) described actions that returning citizens can take both prior to and after release to enhance likelihood of obtaining employment, most described the chaotic and hackneyed ad-hoc tactics employed by returning citizen job-seekers without identifying best practices. The coaching-related literature documents the power of coaching to imbue agency, and the reintegration literature specifically captures the vital role of supportive post-release relationships (religious and mentoring) in solidifying identity, hence it would seem that post-release career coaching as a continuation of carceral-based coaching is a promising area for action research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Overview

This research sought to understand what programs, systems, or processes inside the prison system (e.g., coaching, support, job readiness, educational) promote transformation and re-entry success, including employability and well-being, and in particular dignity, hope, self-efficacy, and sense of identity upon release. The research question sits at the intersection of coaching and theories associated with psychological transformation and explores coaching program consequences, warranting study through a pragmatic lens (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) using an inductive approach and seeking to understand what elements of coaching may contribute to transformation in the lived experiences of recipients. Study of this intersection is at a low maturity level as evidenced by the analysis of the literature, which showed no reviews, few article studies, little empirical evidence, and few conceptual frames.

Research Design and Approach

Given the nascent state of research on coaching within prison as a means of identity transformation, the weak theoretical underpinnings for the coaching practice, and the necessity of lived-experience narratives (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) to answering the research question, an emergent qualitative interview approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) provided good methodological fit. The interview approach used an emergent qualitative design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) allowing for detailed exploration into an area of interest where the participants had considerable knowledge and insight into the phenomenon in question. This approach was well suited as a means of inductively studying the relationship between coaching, hope, and any related identity transformation that contributed to well-being, and reintegration success, which refers to engaging constructively within all forms of social settings, inclusive of "broken family

and community relationships, unresolved mental health and addition issues, and difficulties transitioning to a steady job" (Goodstein, 2019, p. 427). Qualitative, grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014), and phenomenological methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) were utilized throughout.

The study was cross-sectional and employed a semi-structured interview protocol (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). For this project, it was essential to capture the stories of returning citizens to understand how a coaching program they participated in while in prison impacted their lives during and after prison. The semi-structured emergent interview format facilitated flexibility in how participants responded and how the interviewer explored responses, allowing for elaboration on interesting details consistent with the belief that it was not appropriate to tightly prescribe the research plan due to the nascent state of phenomenological understanding. This allowed participants to conceptualize and pursue issues and themes they believed to be essential or of interest to them. Participants were prompted to reflect on their experiences with coaching, support, job readiness, and education programs while in prison and how those impacted their lives before and after release.

Study Context and Coaching Program

The study was conducted in collaboration with a community partner organization, Social Purpose Corrections (SPC). SPC is a non-profit with a vision to build a compassionate incarceration culture in the United States, balancing safety and security with openness and mutual respect between leadership, staff, and residents that fosters trust and meaningful rehabilitation. SPC endeavors to engage correctional residents in a variety of onsite learning and self-improvement opportunities, mental health and wellness programming, coaching, drug/alcohol rehabilitation, and employment credentialing opportunities. All revenues are reinvested into programming, education, health care, and staff development.

There were three key collaborators within SPC: (1) Brian Koehn, Founder and CEO of SPC, who served as a Prison Warden at five different federal facilities, and Director of Security across 65 facilities, (2) Susan (Morris) Folk, member of the SPC Advisory Board, who served for 31 years as Chief of Learning and Career Development for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and (3) Adam Bentley Clausen, the SPC Director of Innovation and Social Impact, formerly incarcerated for over 20 years, and now serving as a coach and expert in crisis management, conflict resolution, and leadership.

The specific context of this study was a cognitive coaching training program that was implemented at the McKean Federal Corrections Institution (FCI McKean), a medium-security United States federal prison for male inmates in Pennsylvania. The approach was developed initially by Dr. Ellen Neily Ritter, a coaching facilitator at the Institute for Life Coach Training (ICLT) and influenced by Pat Williams's work as captured in his book, *Becoming a Professional Life Coach*. With Dr. Ritter's permission, the ICLT approach was adopted and adapted by Warden Morris while she served as Assistant Warden at FCI McKean and ran from 2011 to 2019, until it was shut down due to COVID-19. Understanding of the program was derived from a review of the draft SPC coaching program instructor manual, which is based upon content from the program delivered at McKean, and engaging in multiple program content conversations with Warden Morris and returning citizens who became instructors in the program. A detailed presentation of content from the SPC draft instructor manual appears in Appendix C.

In the first cohort (which I came to refer to as Pioneers), Warden Morris invited selected residents who had participated in an eight-week general education program that she taught to participate in a coaching focused program and facilitated course delivery sessions. The program included a practicum, whereby participants put into practice their learnings by coaching other

McKean residents. The impact of the training upon residents was assessed as very positive by McKean leadership, including Denny J. Whitmore, McKean Supervisor of Education: “Life coaching, unlike mentoring, transfers to someone else the opportunity to become the expert in their own life.”

The program took place during a 20-week period. The objectives of the program were such that participants be able to:

- describe the stages of change and how they impact personal growth,
- demonstrate the traits that lead to professional relationships,
- demonstrate relational skills through active listening, asking powerful questions, and taking empowering action,
- discuss how to apply core correctional skills (e.g., effective reinforcement, effective use of disapproval, and effective use of authority) to their work,
- define the role thinking has in contributing to behavior, and
- demonstrate the use of skill building tools to enhance resiliency.

Program learnings were expected to be put into practice immediately. Accordingly, participants were given a workbook for use in the application of learnings during formal course work and after coursework was completed. There was space within the workbook for an action plan to be recorded, and a course aim was that each participant records an action plan and puts it into use as a daily practice following completion of the course.

Instructional content consisted of seven Modules. Module 1 included an icebreaker and the establishment of a working definition of coaching. Module 2 covered the research forming the foundation of the program. Module 3 taught participants how to develop rapport with others, inclusive of motivating and encouraging others. Skills such as active listening and asking

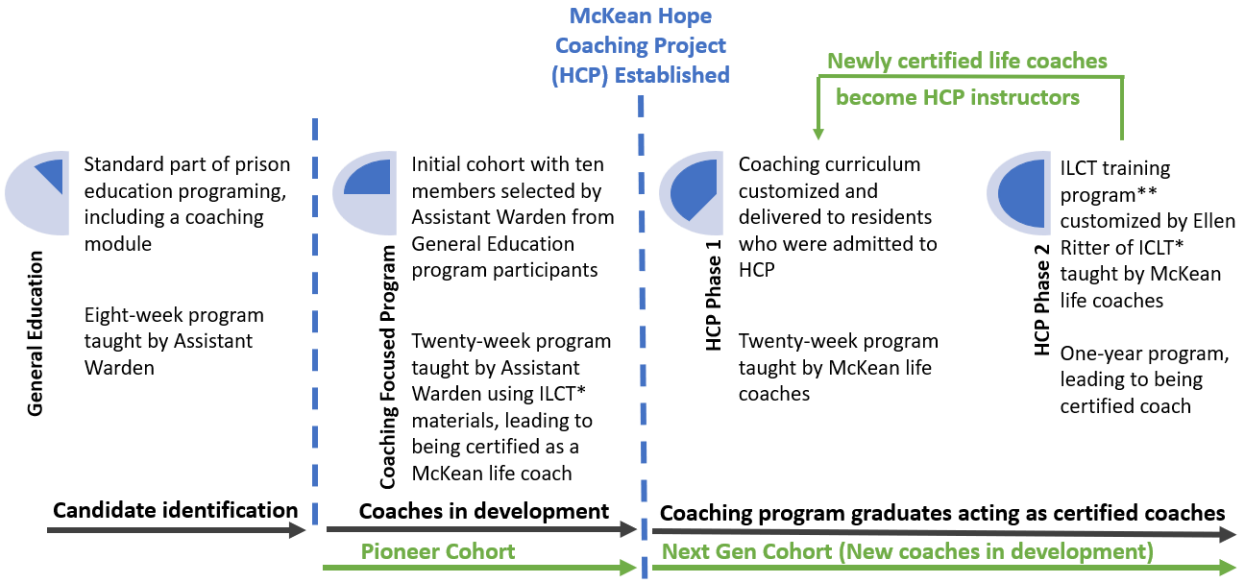
powerful questions were taught in this module. In Module 4, participants learned how to structure a coaching conversation in a way that allows the client to identify the change they want to make, their motivation for making that change, and assume accountability for making that change. Module 5 focused on how to balance positive (rewards) and negative (punishments) reinforcement to create an environment conducive to aiding the client in realizing the change they say they want to make. This module is particularly applicable to correctional staff. Module 6 taught participants how to use their coaching skill to intervene when a peer (or client) is experiencing problematic behaviors to help them improve their discipline around managing thoughts and emotions, inclusive of identifying 'thinking traps' and ways to avoid them. Module 7 closed by calling participants to develop a personal action plan describing how they would act as a coach by putting program learnings into action. Participants in this program developed a high level of ownership and belief in the effectiveness of their learnings and used the associated coaching techniques to help fellow residents.

The Pioneering residents who were graduates of this program subsequently developed a customized coaching program for their peers at McKean, known as the HOPE Coaching Project (HCP), with HOPE being an acronym that stood for Helping Other People Evolve. The program was available to all McKean residents and was marketed to new residents. New residents were given the opportunity to take a Meyers-Briggs personality assessment and join a two-hour goal setting class that utilized the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) goal setting approach. If their interest in coaching and personal development was piqued, they, along with other interested residents, were given the opportunity to apply to join the HCP phase one program, where the Pioneer Cohort (alumni from the initial program instituted by Warden Morris) served as instructors. A group of those who successfully completed the 20-week phase

one program were given the opportunity to apply for a scholarship to participate in the advanced phase two of HCP, which included five coaching modules that spanned a one-year period. Graduates of phase 2 received a Certified Coach designation. I came to refer to this later group of participants as the Next Generation (Next Gen) Cohort. The progression of the McKean program, from conception through HCP is depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Coaching Program Development and Progression



This context and program formed an ideal setting for exploratory research on the impact of coaching. Initial conversations with participants indicated that by accepting the invitation to engage in the coaching program, they exercised agency and experienced an incubation of hope (Snyder et al., 1991). This suggested that curation of hope was possible for individuals within the context of the carceral environment (Wright et al., 2023). Additionally, the group of coaching program graduates who subsequently developed a customized coaching program for incoming McKean residents appeared to have engaged in significant transformation. These participants were compared to those who had less intensive involvement in the program.

Study Population and Sampling

The coaching program included a total of 75 individuals at McKean. The 45 of those individuals who served a sentence and had been released from prison constituted the study population. Remarkably, of the 45 released, archival records indicated only one individual returned to prison (he was arrested for possession of a firearm). This evidenced an extraordinarily low 2% recidivism rate for those who participated in the coaching program, as compared to the greater than 80% recidivism rates among JII more broadly in the general population. Several informal testimonials gathered prior to interviews indicated that in transforming the lives of the inmates, the program facilitated re-entry into society upon release.

A referral sampling approach was taken, whereby potential participants' contact information was provided by Warden Morris and Dr. Ritter. A total of 21 individuals participated (Table 2), including six returning citizens from the Pioneer Cohort, 10 returning citizens from the Next Gen Cohort, and five Administrators.

Table 2

Participant Information by Category

Participant (pseudonyms)	Category	Ethnicity/Race	Age (approx.)	Current Profession
Armando	Pioneer	Latino	35 to 50	In progress
Alan	Pioneer	White	35 to 50	Entrepreneur
Carl	Pioneer	Black	50 to 65	Business owner and large company employee
Scott	Pioneer	Black	30 to 50	Reentry organization manager
Josh	Pioneer	White	35 to 50	Reentry coach
Jeff	Pioneer	Black	50 to 60	Operates his own coaching practice
Alex	Next Gen	Black	45 to 55	Operates his own reentry and consulting company
Clint	Next Gen	Black	40 to 55	Business operator and reentry coach
Juan	Next Gen	Latino	35 to 45	In progress
Kevin	Next Gen	Black	40 to 50	Reentry coach focused on career development for returning citizens
Kyle	Next Gen	Black	35 to 50	Manager at behavior health organization and leadership coach
Matt	Next Gen	Black	35 to 50	Director of program to provide opportunity to disadvantaged youth
Pepe	Next Gen	Latino	30 to 60	Employed by returning citizen reentry transition company
Ron	Next Gen	Black	30 to 60	Entrepreneur and business owner
Sean	Next Gen	Black	35 to 50	In progress
Victor	Next Gen	Black	50 to 65	Employed by returning citizen reentry transition company
Brandon	Administrator	White	50 to 70	Veteran federal prison warden
Sharon	Administrator	White	50 to 70	Veteran federal prison warden
Emily	Administrator	White	50 to 70	Veteran coaching educator and coaching program administrator
James	Administrator	White	50 to 70	Veteran reentry organization executive
Anna	Administrator	N/A	35 to 50	Veteran talent management and leadership development professional

All returned citizens progressed through the coaching program to the point of becoming certified coaches and all fell within the estimated age range of 35 to 65 years old.

Data Collection Methods and Instruments

An initial interview protocol was developed based on the literature. After receiving approval from Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (Appendix A), the protocol was reviewed by the program administrators and one participant and subsequently revised. Next, three pilot interviews were conducted during May and June of 2023, after which, the protocol (Appendix D) was again adjusted. The data collection period for the study spanned May of 2023 through November of 2024.

The entire list of returning citizens who had participated in the program was sent an invitation to join the study. Those who accepted received an interview invitation and an informed consent form (Appendix E). It was emphasized that this was an entirely voluntary process and that those contacted were under no obligation to participate. Interviews ranged from 30 to 90 minutes in duration and were conducted virtually via Zoom, using my Zoom account.

At the beginning of each interview, participants were provided an overview of the study protocol and asked if they had any questions or concerns. Participants were then asked to indicate informed consent. With the participants' permission, verbatim transcripts were acquired through Otter.ai transcription software and Zoom's transcription feature. Also, Zoom audio and video recordings were captured. Numerous steps were taken to protect participant privacy and the confidentiality of the study data. Transcription files and recordings were stored on a secure password protected drive that only the research team could access. To help ensure anonymity, each interview participant was assigned a code, and transcripts were edited to replace participant names with assigned codes. A master document with codes was kept in a secure, password-protected location. The only persons with access to research records were the study personnel, and as required by law, the Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University, and any other person, agency, or sponsor required by law. In addition to interviews, other data sources were examined to aid in triangulation during analysis. These sources are detailed in Table 3.

Table 3

Data Sources

Type	Amount	Use in Analysis
Interviews	32 total (30 -80 minutes each, resulting in 267 pages of single-space transcription) • 25 – Among 16 returning citizens who participated in the Coaching program; 6 of these were members of the Pioneer Cohort and 10 were members of the Next Gen Cohort • 4 – Among 2 former Federal Bureau of Prisons Officers • 1 - Executive in a re-entry organization • 1 - Dean of Students at a Life Coaching Institute • 1 - Executive at Social Profit Corrections	Psychological hope curation providing actionable pathways and agency curation; transformational relational processes, including dignity formation; behavioral changes facilitating self-efficacy building
Archival and secondary archival documents and data	• Coaching program documents • Videos recordings of Federal Bureau of Prisons leadership describing results of program • Video of returning citizen describing her journey to recovery • Brochures and articles (4 pages) • Lecture plans (123 pages) • Lecture slides (128 pages) • Social Purpose Corrections website • Presentation regarding substance abuse programs for returned citizens	Psychological hope curation providing actionable pathways and agency curation; transformational relational processes, including dignity formation; behavioral changes facilitating self-efficacy building
Informal narratives and conversations	13 total (30-90 minutes each) • 1 – Leader of Illinois Policy • 1 – Leader of Society of Human Resource Management • 5 – Governor, COO, & First Lady of Tennessee, member of Governor's policy staff • 4 – Returning citizens who did not complete the coaching program • 1 – Major health care system addition recovery and re-entry coordinator • 1 – Current Federal Bureau of Prisons Officer	Behavioral changes facilitating self-efficacy building for reintegration
Personal memos	15 sets that include a total of 8 pages captured during interviews	Understanding of hope and agency curation; transformational relational processes, behavioral changes

Ethical Considerations and Human Subjects Issues

Studies that involve humans must ensure standards are in place to protect participants and ensure their understanding of the boundaries associated with their voluntary participation (Billups, 2021). Participants' well-being was of paramount consideration. Given that this research involved formerly incarcerated persons, there may have been unforeseen risks to participants. To mitigate such risks, no information was collected that would pose a risk to any participant with respect to their employment. Also, participant responses to questions in the study's interview protocol were not assessed as posing risks to participants' reputations, employability, financial standing, and/or educational advancement. The interview protocol questions posed no more risk than a person is likely to experience in daily life activities. While there was a chance that individuals would recall uncomfortable conversations, it was not anticipated that this would cause duress.

To minimize the risk of psychological discomfort, had a participant have become upset by the interview process, the participant could have stopped the interview at any time. In addition, participants were informed of their rights to refuse to answer any question posed. Had the interviewees recalled conversations or situations that caused the participant discomfort, referrals to counseling resources would have been provided. Additionally, to minimize the risk of coercion, participants were informed that their participation in this study was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time and without cause, reason, or explanation. Beyond the well-being of the participants, the other major ethical consideration was that of ensuring that the research was not treated as a primarily academic endeavor. The intent of the research was that it be applied for the benefit of incarcerated persons and their relations.

Pre-study Biases

Pre-study bias existed in the form of perceptions of prison life derived predominately from media portrayals. There also existed some level of belief that: a) those who are incarcerated are generally guilty of the crimes for which they were convicted, b) the types of criminal activity producing conviction varied broadly, c) family life during incarcerated persons' youth was unhealthy and/or financially challenged, and d) pre-incarceration educational attainment among incarcerated persons was generally low. Additionally, bias existed regarding coaching in the form of beliefs that: a) coaches care deeply about aiding the maturation of their clients, and b) facilitative coaching (praise, learn, positive outcome focused) is superior to pressure-based coaching (criticism, force, negative outcome avoidance) for the development of clients toward realizing their goals. Awareness of these biases enhanced objectivity in the tone of how interview questions were posed and in the way interview data were coded and interpreted. Also, awareness produced conscious willingness to modify these biases, thereby enhancing objectivity throughout the research process.

Data Analysis

This section describes the approach taken to analyze the research data and synthesize findings to form a process model. Qualitative coding results are presented along with the process used to perform trustworthiness and dependability checks, for example by comparing the interviews with the six participants from the Pioneer Cohort who were part of the initial cohort taught by Warden Morris, became certified coaches, and subsequently developed the HCP (i.e., more intensive involvement) to the interviews with the 10 participants from the Next Gen Cohort who had subsequently completed the HCP program developed by the Pioneers. Finally, a

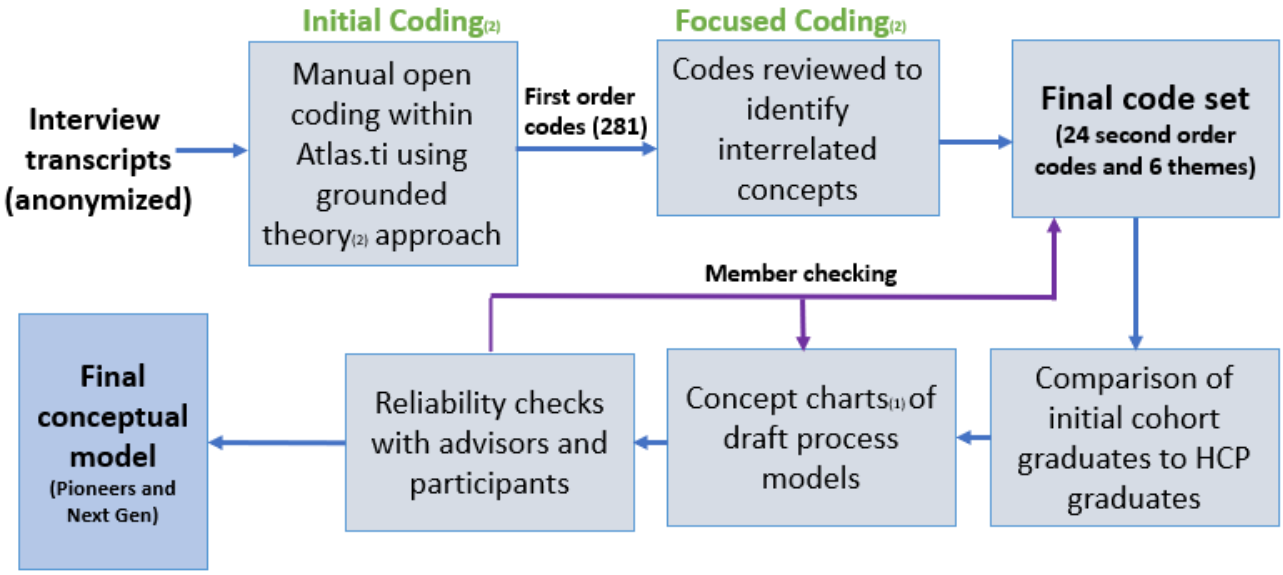
process model is offered, describing the transformation process experienced by returning citizens who participated in the coaching program.

Analytical Approach

Interview data were analyzed using a qualitative approach consistent with that suggested by Gioia et al. (2012), Charmaz (2014), and Lofland et al. (2006) using a systematic hierarchical coding process to inductively identify themes from interview transcripts to understand how distinctive approaches to coaching within the prison context were related to experiences and behaviors as returning citizens. The coding approach used is depicted in Figure 4 and involved downloading transcripts from each interview into Atlas.ti coding software and coding manually using a grounded theory coding process (Lofland et al., 2006).

Figure 4

Data Analysis Method



Initial Coding

Initial coding (Charmaz, 2014) was performed via sentence-by-sentence transcript review, extracting compelling *in vivo* quotes supporting 281 first order codes. Table 4 provides examples of first order codes derived from participant quotes.

Table 4

Examples of First Order Codes Derived from Participant Quotes

First Order Code	Quote
Deficit of hope in early life environment	"Most guys were told, 'you're never going to amount to nothing.' Most guys never were told, you know, that 'hey, you know, I'm proud of you." [begins to cry] A lot of guys they've never heard that from somebody."
Power of physical touch	"The guys joke because, you know, like, if you're a guy and you go to like, bring a guy in and yeah, like a guy hug, a very hard hug. Well, I kept like, whenever people pulled me in, I would grab their hand, and I would keep my elbow in front, so that you couldn't get any closer than that. That was the distance and that was all of my conditioning. From those anti-social environments. Those behaviors were deeply ingrained. And the guys would not allow me to keep that separation. Like they'd be like, as we got to know each other, as we're revealing in this circle, physical circle of trust, sharing things. They slowly over time are like, 'no, no, no, you're gonna break that down,' and they push it out the way, and they pull me in and physically embrace me. The reality is we all seek human connection."
Coaching provoked change in thinking	"Guys who were taking the program - you literally saw, including myself, you literally saw my thinking change. You literally saw me and many of us talking to each other about how we could make the world a better place….how are we going to use coaching to help us become better men?"
Convinced of God's work in one's life	"Nobody can tell me that this ain't God's work. You cannot convince me of it."

Focused Coding

Focused coding (Charmaz, 2014) was then performed by aggregating first order codes into groupings of interrelated concepts, yielding a final code set of 24 second order codes. Table 5 provides a sample of second order codes, their supporting first order codes, and the themes under which they fall.

Table 5

Examples of Second Order Code Sample from Code Structure

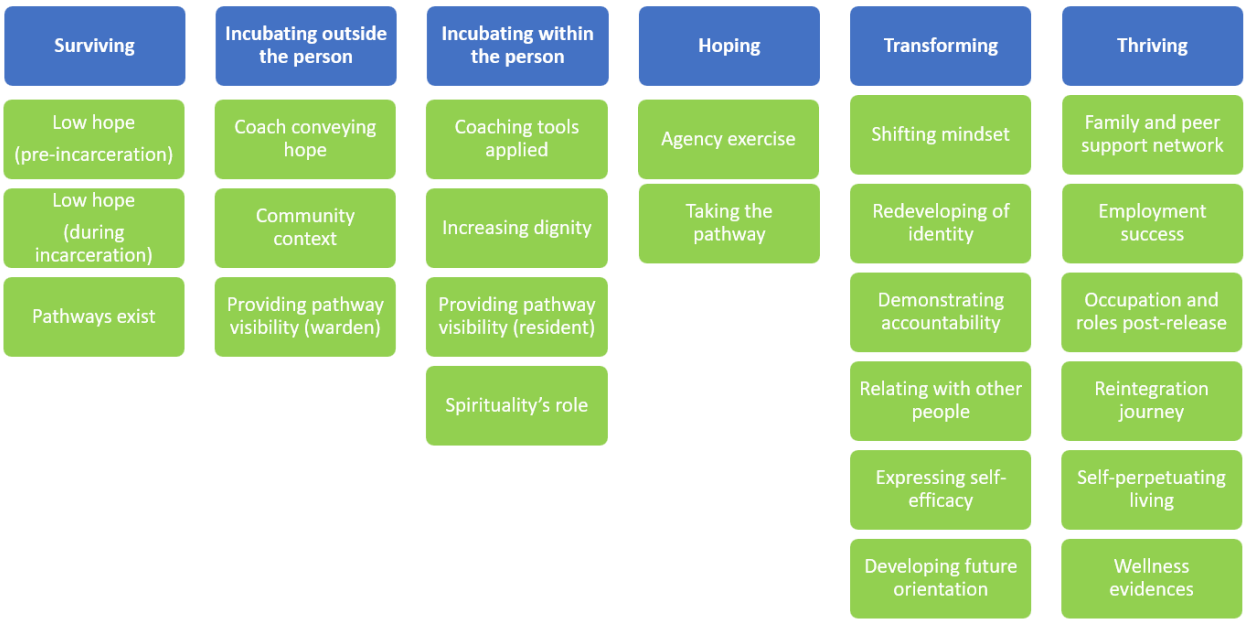
Second Order Code	Supporting First Order Codes	Associated Theme
Coaching tools applied	Healthy habit formation	Incubating hope from within the person
Shifting Mindset	Manning the mind's gate	Hoping
Agency exercise	Willingness to do the work love requires	Hoping
Reintegration journey	Reentry into altered civilian ecosystem	Thriving

Thematic Coding

Interrelated second order codes were then aggregated into six themes. Figure 5 depicts the theme and second order code structure. The complete code structure, inclusive of first and second order codes and themes, is shown in Appendix F. A subset of the structure showing themes and second order codes, along with their supporting definitions, is shown in Appendix G.

Figure 5

Themes and Second Order Code Structure



Trustworthiness of the Analysis

Trustworthiness and dependability checks included detailed primary advisor review of code sets produced at each coding stage and member checking (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Member checking took the form of reviewing the coding process, representative codes, and process model drafts with Warden Morris, and three of the study participants who were intimately involved in the coaching program to assess their validity. Modest adjustments to the code set and process model were made based upon these checks, leading to the process model presented below.

Subgroup Comparison

Before finalizing the process model, a contrast analysis was performed, comparing the Pioneer Cohort (the subgroup of participants who became certified coaches as graduates of the initial coaching program and went on to develop the HCP; $n = 6$), with the Next Gen Cohort (those that completed the HCP to become certified coaches; $n = 10$). The individual narratives for each individual were constructed and then similarities and differences between the subgroups were noted across each segment of the model. Results generally supported the logic of the model, that those who engaged more intensively (i.e., the Pioneers) had also progressed more fully through the model, providing added confidence that the model represented the degree to which the process of transformation occurred.

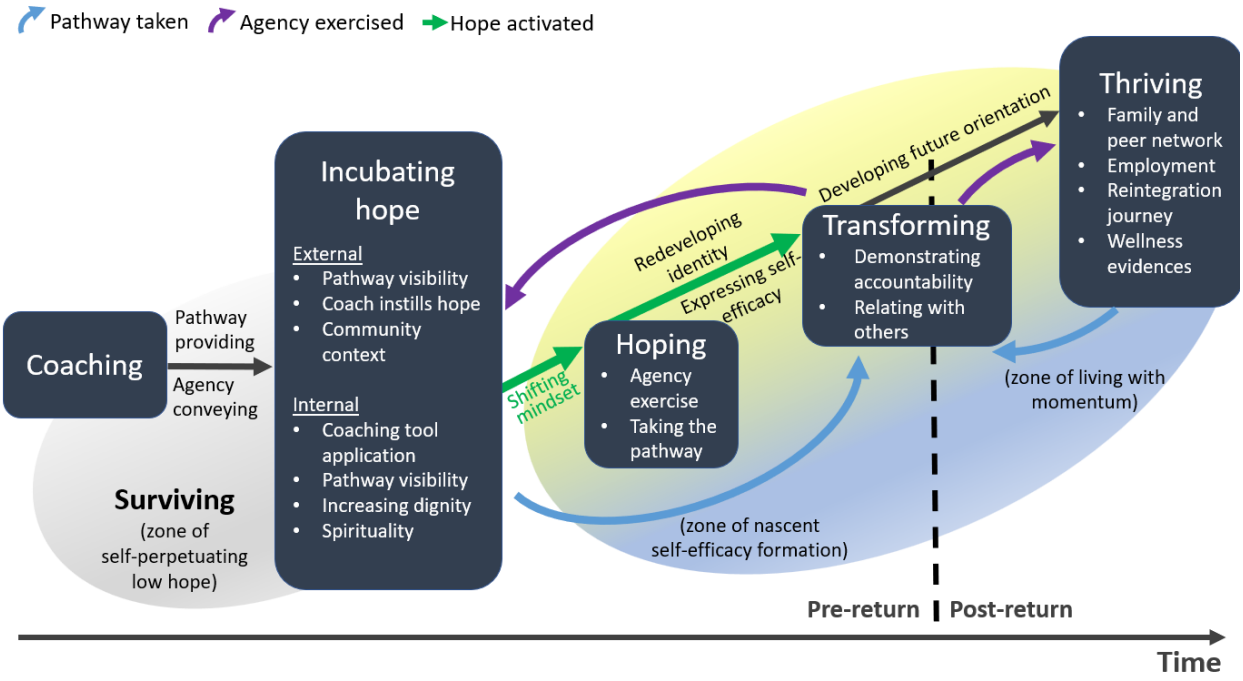
Emergent Process Model

Following the coding process, which produced thematic clarity, multiple concept charts (Lofland et al., 2006) depicting notions of the transformation process were created to derive a conceptual framework for a process model. The model (Figure 6) that ultimately emerged built upon preliminary notions derived from literature, sharpening understanding of the nuances

associated with the lived experience of participants who underwent the transformation and how that transformation manifested both before and after release. For example, because of the analysis, the hope incubation process was expanded to capture with greater granularity the incubation processes occurring both external and internal to participants, and the shifting mindset emerging from that incubation process was added to the hoping process.

Figure 6

Transformation Model



The model, flowing from left to right to express the passage of time, posits the opportunity to receive coaching as a disruptor, potentially leading to inmates breaking free from the mental shackles associated with a zone of seemingly constant self-perpetuating low hope (depicted with monochromatic coloration in the model) within which many of them resided and were simply *surviving*. Warden Morris offered to multiple McKean residents this opportunity, thereby disrupting the low hope zone in a way that led to hope formation. Warden Morris' offer

served as a *pathway provider* and initial *agency conveyor,* representing the two key components (agency and pathways) of hope formation (Snyder et al., 1991).

For participants who entered the program, Warden Morris' effective coaching and the encouragement of fellow cohort members served as *external incubators* of hope. Simultaneously, as coaching students applied their learnings from the program, hope incubation occurred *internally*, manifesting as *increasing dignity*, and for some, a deepening of their relationship with God *(spirituality)*. The model further suggests that as hope developed within individuals, they began to experience the catalytic effects of a *shifting mindset,* and started *exercising agency, taking pathways,* and beginning to believe that they needed to and could change behaviorally. Ultimately, they began *hoping.*

This change in thinking and behavior produced conscious changes in self-perception of identity in the form of a *redeveloping identity*. As this redeveloping identity manifested, it was noticed and reinforced by coaches, coaching cohort peers, and others in their social circles, representing the *nascent stages* of *self-efficacy* formation. As this self-efficacy blossomed, individuals continued to exercise agency and take new, hopeful pathways consistent with their transforming identities in a virtuous loop that perpetuated hope incubation, advanced identity transformation (Gibson et al., 2023), and contributed to self-efficacy formation (Bandura, 1977). The greater prison context where this blossoming occurred tested the strength of individuals' transformation, as ample opportunity existed to slip into old thinking and behaving patterns, represented in the model by the color gradient across blue and yellow within the nascent self-efficacy formation zone.

Participants were now in the *transformation* process proper, whereby *accountability* for actions and healthy *relational* patterns were demonstrated. Their transformed selves began to

develop a *future orientation* that included their future within their carceral environment but also extended to the possibility of a post-release future. As they crossed the release threshold (represented by the vertical dotted line) as returning citizens, their transformed hopeful identities were taken into larger society.

At this point, the returning citizens faced many potential pathways while in possession of an enhanced level of agency associated with a transformed identity and increased self-efficacy. Agency was then exercised within the post-release ecosystem to promote *thriving* and create a post release agency/pathway loop that resulted in identity stability and fostered wellness, reducing the likelihood of engaging in recidivistic behaviors. This post-release hopeful loop of healthy agency exercise and pathway taking resided within a zone in which self-efficacy was sustained by momentum created through participants' exercising of the loop.

This zone of *living with momentum* contained significant challenges to the returning citizens' transformed identities, such as headwinds associated with seeking and obtaining employment, as represented in the model by the color gradient across blue and yellow. Yet, the returning citizens, equipped with self-efficacy that had been honed within the walls of McKean, were able to experience *evidences of wellness*, such as gaining and maintaining employment, as their post-release hopeful approach to living with momentum allowed them to navigate an ongoing cycle of emerging reintegration challenges that were met with an ever-building sense of self-efficacy. This remarkable transformation experienced by participants as they transited from a lifestyle of survival to one of thriving is captured with granularity within the study findings presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Overview

Records showed that of the 45 individuals who participated in the program and had been released, only one returned to prison. Building upon this extraordinary fact, even more compelling is the fact that the participants in our study are now making meaningful changes in the lives of others, in their own coaching, counseling, and consulting practices, and as teachers, therapists, and social activists. As just one example, a participant shared that he has become an adjunct professor and facilitated over 200 classes, as well as started a non-profit for re-entry coaching. Accordingly, the overall message of the Transformation Model that emerged in the analysis is that cognitive coaching within the carceral environment appears to impact curation of hope and agency formation, which then may catalyze identity transformation toward prosocial behaviors that contribute to employability and wellbeing upon return to society. This chapter presents the findings, progressing through each theme within the Transformation Model.

Surviving

This theme captures the notion of doing what is necessary to survive within the social context in which participants lived prior to incarceration and within the prison system, before engaging in coaching. Actions deemed necessary to survival may have been illegal and were not rooted in the notion that a better future was possible beyond the life offered within their current ecosystems. The surviving theme consists of three second order codes, including: low hope (pre-incarceration), low hope during incarceration, and pathways exist.

Low Hope (Pre-Incarceration)

Participants were able to clearly articulate the depth of their pre-incarceration survival experience**.** Matt, a Black participant, age 35-50, who after serving his sentence at McKean

currently works at a college coordinating a program aimed to provide opportunity to disadvantaged students, captured his experience:

> *Everybody wants to be good. I believe it, just everybody isn't offered the, isn't afforded opportunities to act on our goodness. They have to do things, and they like to survive… out of the need to survive that makes them do things that they don't want to do, but they feel that it's necessary and that they have to do.*

Matt's experience suggests that his pre-incarceration life embodied little agency and limited pathways, some of which he preferred not to take because taking them required him to do things he didn't want to do. Yet, his will to survive took precedence over his conscience. Additionally, Ron, a Black entrepreneur and business operator, captured the process by which a seemingly benevolent family member took him under his wing and taught him survival techniques applicable to the neighborhood in which he lived:

> *My cousin was also what we would call a big homie for me because he was the one who helped me make my transition off the porch into the streets, which I don't fault him, because he was showing me how to survive to the best of his way.*

Other participants captured their sense of little to no expectation of goal attainment. Juan, a 35–45-year-old Latino whose parents were first generation immigrants to the United States, stated, "I just thought I was gonna sell drugs for the rest of my life." Regarding pre-incarceration peer perceptions of his lack of potential, a 35–45-year-old Latino participant, Armando, offered: "When you're voting your senior year of high school on most likely to be president or whatever, fill in the blank, I was voted most likely to end up in prison [blinking to hold back tears while also grinning]." Matt's, Ron's, Juan's, and Armando's recounting of their pre-incarceration mindsets offer a largely homogeneous telling of a low hope, low optionality, environment exacerbated by little prospect of experiencing anything different and few tools with which to use to break free.

Low Hope During Incarceration

Consistent with participant's pre-incarceration mindsets, the low hope environment persisted into their incarceration experience. The extension of this self-perpetuating low hope existence was expressed by Alex, a Black business owner, age 45-55, who started a reentry consulting company upon release, "I just felt my energy depleted. My self-esteem was low. I didn't feel good about myself because there was no optimism in prison." Alex's description of a dignity malaise that sapped his energy depicted little motivation to take actions toward improving the quality of his life.

This sense of low agentic motivation was reinforced by Scott, a Black participant who now manages a reentry facility, who said regarding the prison environment, "People don't have any agency. They don't. They can't even decide what time they get up in the morning, what they're going to eat, you know it's just so little." Thus, highlighting the consistency between the limited agency and pathway mindsets among participants prior to and during incarceration, suggesting that without a breaking of the self-perpetuating cycle of low hope, participants had little likelihood of sustained experience of wellness.

Pathways Exist

The self-perpetuating low hope environment was not devoid of pathways that held some promise for change, but participants noted they had to choose to avail themselves of these opportunities**.** Within the carceral environment, pathways for betterment were present, as noted by Sean, a Black participant, age 35-50**:**

> *There's a saying that says that, you know, like the institution is almost like college, and I was definitely living by those words. So, the programs that we were already involved in, you know, me facilitating some, me participating in some. I was taking advantage of every program available.*

Similarly, betterment pathways were also present in the pre-incarceration environment, as described by Juan, “You know, if he's the star linebacker, then they kind of put them in a bubble [becomes very animated with hands] and they even guide them out of the out of all the mess.” Yet, those opportunities appeared as more selective and perhaps available only to those who were exceptionally gifted, for example in athletics, as Juan further offers, “But other than that (star linebacker), they kind of, you get picked on and bullied until you choose to stay in your room,” suggesting that Juan’s youth was such that prospects for advancement of one’s position in life lay nearly exclusively in athletics. In the event one was not a star athlete, which was most often the case, little incentive existed to express agency toward pathway exploration. In Juan’s case, this resulted in a retreat to his room.

Summary of Surviving Theme

Prior to engaging in the McKean coaching program, living without hope was a reality for participants, both in their pre- and post-incarceration experiences**.** This low hope existence was characterized by doing what was necessary to exist within a social ecosystem that reinforced lack of motivation for aspiring to better their lives through goal attainment (Snyder et al., 1991)**.** Engaging in a lifestyle of surviving found participants holding perspectives such as expecting to always be a drug dealer or of fulfilling high school peers’ prognostications regarding their prison-based destiny.

While pathways were available to participants, both before and after incarceration, the inherently reduced opportunity to express decision making agency within the carceral environment further reduced any agentic motivation to pursue those pathways. Disturbance of this self-perpetuating low hope ecosystem would be necessary to embark upon a progressive and hopeful pathway toward release. This disturbance would also need to include a reprovisioning of

participants' psychological tool kits, especially pertaining to hope. Two themes involved the incubation of hope, manifested as the incipient stage of the transformation process and essential to mindset shift, including an incubation process that emanated from outside the person, as well as incubation inside the person, representing two distinct processes that worked in parallel to provide a fertile environment for hope to take root and grow.

Incubating Hope from Outside the Person

Moving beyond merely surviving, the second theme – incubating hope from outside the person – included second order codes for describing the processes by which the coaching program provide an ecosystem, external to the participants, which was conducive to hope formation. This theme embodied three second order codes: providing pathway visibility (warden), coach instills hope, and community context.

Providing Pathway Visibility (Warden)

The low hope ecosystem had the strength necessary to self-perpetuate, continuing to operate until intervened upon. Such an intervention came in the form of Assistant Warden Morris and her belief that the men of McKean had potential that reached beyond the walls of the prison. Perhaps it seemed unlikely that this veteran administrator, through her pioneering offering of a cognitive coaching focused course, could pierce and disrupt the low hope existence of these men. Yet, her persistent pathway visibility providing and agency conveying actions had a powerful effect, as expressed by Armando: "With Miss Sharon believing in me, I wanted to do better. And I realized that when I started believing in others and bringing them along and kind of encouraging to be better, they started doing better."

Her intervention efforts began with the simple offering of a coaching-focused course, as further expressed by Alan, who participated in the McKean coaching and program and who became a key advocate for the program among McKean residents:

> *So, Susan was outside, and she's the associate warden. She asked me to come towards her, which I did, but I was very uncomfortable. And she said, 'Mr. Alan, I'm starting a coaching program, and I'd really like you to be in it.' And I said, 'I don't do programs. I've, I've spent over a decade [in prison], you know, 12 years, 13 years at this point. I have my space carved out up there in recreation [the weight room].'*

Despite this initial refusal, Warden Morris persisted in her belief in the potential of the men within her scope of responsibility, serving as a sort of rescuer to whom it was difficult to say no. Alan further commented,

> *Coming off of a lockdown, we're coming back down to that same dining hall for the first time in two weeks. And here she is at the bottom of the hill, waving me down. 'Mr. Alan, Come here.' I said, 'Oh my gosh. She's calling my name out, and everybody's looking at me. Like, how does this woman know your name?' So, I went over to her and she said, 'I have your textbook.'*

Warden Morris' persistent offering of visibility to the coaching pathway appears to have been the beginnings of a small fracture in the shell of the low hope ecosystem. The coaching focused program represented a fresh pathway, different from traditional prison programing, which had the potential to rescue from the shackles of their own minds those who were willing to take it.

Coach Instills Hope

As powerful was Warden Morris' desire to provide pathway visibility, perhaps more powerful was her ability to offer hope, highlighting the power of a prison official's belief in an inmate. This ability was captured by Armando, who offered,

> *It was really Miss Susan's personality and her being and just her believing in me, helped me realize 'Hang on a second, yeah, I can do good things.' It was that affirmation of her belief in us, or me. It was her believing in me and my abilities, and that I can do great things. That really was the turning point.*

The power of a coach to instill hope was not limited to Warden Morris. Several residents who participated in the program later became coaches and demonstrated similar hope instilling ability by effectively becoming conveyors of the hope Warden Morris had instilled in them. One participant, Juan, said "She (Warden Morris) took seven, eight, ten guys through the program. Now those seven, eight, to ten guys, now they can facilitate to us." This multiplication of coaches speaks to the scalability of the coaching program and its potential for broad use within large institutions.

Community Context

Along with the efforts of the coaches, influences among the participants' community of peers who were going through the coaching program manifested as a powerful contributor to incubation of hope**.** Sean noted the power of community in combating the cultural influences within McKean that were counter to participating in the program**:** "We created our own community in there. I think that helps the people who are able to take advantage of it the most, you know, because in a facility like that, it's the stereotype is not to be what we were."

Participants' willingness to participate seemed to encourage other residents to join, as Sean continued, "Yeah, and because we created a safe space, you know, and we did it with our chest out and head heads held high. That really helped people join in and really, you know, excel at it." Similarly, peer influence among program participants manifested in the form of protecting the reputations of the program and its participants. One participant, Pepe, a Latino who has been working and advancing at an organization that aids returning citizens in transitioning from prison to larger society, captured this palpable reinforcer of behavior:

> *But there was a small group of us that, we walked our talk, you know, we did things the way we were supposed to, no matter what circumstances popped up. We felt that if we jeopardize, we will jeopardize, not only our future, but the future of others that will come behind us well.*

The impact of community extended to the larger McKean population, including transcendence of race subcultures that manifested in ways such as where one sits in the cafeteria. Prior to the coaching program, those of the same race sat together, and only those of the same race were welcome, with threat of violence to anyone who attempted to violate that norm. After the coaching program, Alan captured this transcendence: "So gang leaders bought in. People [of different races] started sitting at the same table in the cafeteria, rather than the traditional and something special was happening." He referred to this as a miracle, that different races would join in a meal together, converse, and get along interpersonally.

The power of community manifested as an integral part of the willingness of participants to continue in the program. That sustained willingness and visible commitment to the principles taught in the program served to attract other residents to the program.

Summary of Incubating Hope from Outside the Person

Warden Morris, through championing the McKean coaching program, served as a disturbance that pierced the low hope zone of survival, thereby fostering an alternative ecosystem conducive to hope formation. By providing a pathway to enter the program, Warden Morris held out a vision for an improved future. The cohort structure of the program provided a sense of community which served to foster hope incubation and continuance in a program that was outside the norm of McKean programing, and more anomalistic, was yielding non stereotypical behaviors among participants.

Incubating Hope from Within the Person

In concert with the influences external to participants that served to incubate hope formation, hope began to form due to changes within participants' beings, as they began to believe that their thinking and behaviors could change. Within this third theme, four second

order codes captured coaching as a means of fostering an introspection conducive to hope formation: coaching tools applied, increasing dignity, providing pathway visibility (resident), and spirituality's role. Application of coaching tools, such as active listening, goal identification, goal pursuit option development, and thinking before reacting served to reinforce this emerging belief and would lead to transformation.

Coaching Tools Applied

Participants in the program were taught many coaching tools as detailed in Appendix C. The most powerful learnings came through application of these tools within the McKean environment. Alan captured how the program equipped him with tools associated with thinking rather than reacting: "really teaching people how their minds worked, and how to be actively engaged, you know, in making better decisions." Pepe further captured the way the tools were focused on using the mind to process emotions and to view adverse experiences as a form of tuition paid toward a better future: "taught me not to be angry at myself, but to use it as a learning experience." Additionally, the formation of healthy habits of thinking and behaving appeared as prominent tools contributing to more hopeful mindset formation. Ron offered,

> *Understanding of the habits, the way life coaching breaks down, habits and how everything is a ritual by us being habitual and learning how to control your own habits and how to program your mind to have healthy habits where you could be on autopilot to be successful.*

A key evidence of healthy habit formation came with the development of accountability behaviors through application of the program's tools associated with ensuring accountability, such as identifying what one will do, when they will do it, how they know they have done it, and what support they need to do it. Josh, a White participant, age 35-50, who works for an organization that assists returning citizens in their journeys to successfully reenter society, captured one such moment of tool application: "Each participant had a role in not only taking

control of their life with the tools we were given but being a partner to each one and holding each other accountable in the classroom." Other participants, such as Alex, applied the goal tools of identifying goals, comparing them to current reality, developing options for pursuit, and identifying actions to be taken. Alex offered the following regarding application of the goal tools to himself, creating a curriculum that used the asking powerful questions tool to help others:

> *So, I created the curriculum to teach people coming home leadership skills and how to write, and I did all of this by just coaching, using the coach approach, hearing what people were saying and asking questions to get them to say more.*

Kevin, a Black participant, age 40 - 50, began coaching through a non-profit organization and ended up working for a reentry organization in a position that helps returning citizens with career development. In this study, he found the asking powerful questions tool applicable to himself as a mirror to reflect upon his historical decision quality. With an intensely personal insight, he offered, "For me, it [asking powerful questions] was a different reality moment for me, just taking a real honest look at my life and decisions that I made and how they affect not just myself, but others." Carl was a Black participant, age 50-65, who drives trucks for large companies and has his own LLC. He noted the impact of the behavior change tools, such as identifying motivations for behavior change, upon his post release attitudes and actions and his quality of life pertaining to his family: "Man, you're going to get to enjoy your granddaughter. You can't come out bitter. It will destroy you and everybody around you." Program participants applied the tools among their coaching cohort peers and among other residents to reinforce their effectiveness while also using them to develop personal goals and provide insight regarding their own behavior and decision making. As sustained application occurred, beliefs about oneself began to change.

Providing Pathway Visibility (Resident)

Developing the ability to not only envision a pathway, but also help others envision a pathway was demonstrated by participants**.** This ability to seek the betterment of others was characteristic of the internal hope incubation process, whereby the men who were in the program became pathway providers, thereby showing a belief that they had something to give**.** Matt offered,

> *Yeah, there was original group of men who introduced to me a coaching program by Ms. Susan (assistant warden), and they utilized it in a different way to help them deal with the amount of time that they were serving in federal prison. They said I want to come out, and such, to recruit other men that they seen because, you know, I was one of those men, you know, that was approached.*

Another resident, Josh, described it this way:

> *We believe our models are models of habilitation. This habilitation is given, helping to facilitate the ability to drive for the first time. Rehabilitation as our system currently follows, it is a misnomer, rehabilitate means to get back to the ability. That's just simply not true for many of the men or women that are in the carceral setting. So, habilitation is the language we should use. Because we're hoping to facilitate the ability to do these things for the first time.*

Josh's notion of habilitation versus rehabilitation captures a nurturing, others-oriented, sentiment that developed among the men who went through the coaching program. There was an apparent mindset shift from focusing heavily on surviving in a self-perpetuating low hope environment to voluntarily creating room in their thought space to consider the interests of others. One example was offered by Kyle, a Black participant, age 35-50, who helps lead a behavioral health organization and serves as a leadership coach:

> *I want to get my PhD in behavioral psychology. That's my ultimate, that's my retirement goal, because I want to retire at an HBCU, and I just want to teach from about 62. My dad's 95, and I'm hopeful I'm gonna have the same years yet from 60 to 95.*

Another example was shared by Ron, who offered,

> *I've taught over I don't even know how many hours well over well over 10,000 hours I've taught facilitating and giving back to guys and helping them make that paradigm shift with their thoughts and their mindsets and understanding that just because you've been through something that's not the end all be all. You can be whoever you want to be and do what you want to do, if you focus on shaping that mindset.*

In each case, we see movement from survival-oriented thinking toward envisioning pathways that have the potential to benefit others.

Increasing Dignity

As residents progressed through the program, meaningful changes began to occur within them**.** Specifically, they began to experience increased dignity in the form of their views of their self-worth (Gibson et al., 2023)**.** Ron expressed this confidence in who he was becoming**:** "If you still see me as I was in 2007, that's really on you**.** That's right. You probably got something to deal with on your own that has nothing to do with me."

The notion of inherent self-worth emerged within participants. One participant, Jeff, pronounced, "That's the only thing that validates me - that I know that I matter." This powerful statement offers a poignant contrast to the survival mindset of the self-perpetuating low hope existence, representing the fulfilling of what Alan offered as a universal longing of all who are in prison: "I never met anyone while I was in prison who didn't want to gain dignity and thrive."

The attitudes expressed by the program facilitators were often referenced by participants. Alex described those attitudes this way: "They [Warden Morris and Ms. Ritter] treated us like human beings, and they never once saw us through the lenses of our cases." This respectful attitude of seeing the person first offered by those in authority appears to have manifested as a form of dignity conveyance that contributed to an internally perceived increase in dignity for participants.

Some experienced increasing dignity as they were given the opportunity as participants in the program to interact in classes among students at the University of Pittsburgh, Bradford. Armando described his experience this way:

> *Students from the University of Pittsburgh - so when I was coming alongside them, and kind of having the intellectual discourse that you have in a class or college course, I'm realizing like, 'hang on a second.' Yeah, even though I'm a little bit older than them, but I kind of realized that I could compete intellectually with someone who was going to be a lawyer and end up being a judge somewhere. And realizing that for me, that was another affirming moment in my life throughout this program being exposed to that. You know, if I wouldn't have ever been exposed to that. You know, it's moments like that along the way, right. I guess sort of benchmarks and realizing that I could use my mind in a better way.*

Armando's dignity building experience at the University of Pittsburgh offers a much different view of his potential versus the peer assessment of his potential as a high school student.

Spirituality's Role

Exploring and developing participants' faith was not a formal part of the coaching curriculum**.** However, for some participants, the program served to kindle their relationship with God**.** Armando spoke to this**:**

> *Most of the people were spiritually, like, integrated with their specific belief system. I think that was a big part of, you know, just wanting to do better, be better. That higher power that gives you kind of a set of rules as you live your life, but to stay connected with a good energy source, right. And that's definitely an element, a component that was a part of my life. I was part of the praise and worship team. I played drums. I think there was a time there, I actually took over the duties of leading the praise and worship team.*

Participants also expressed their belief that God had placed Warden Morris in their lives. Kyle offered with conviction,

> *I think that Susan empowered us in ways that she didn't even intend. I think she, as a vessel for God's work, really empowered us to do and think our way through difficult situations and being able to identify and define certain gaps and then set out, to solve them, right?*

Armando further expressed, “He (God) put Momma Susan in my path to kind of help fulfill my void of my mom.” Additionally, Warden Morris offered a comment that captures the power of spirituality weaving through the program: “Christ was the best teacher out there. So yeah, when I talk about even the inclusiveness of the program and things of that nature. I think my faith did play a role in it.”

For several participants, growth in their relationship with God parallelled their transformation experience. Victor, a Black participant, age 50-65, who works at an organization that provides reentry services to returning citizens was one of those. Capturing the program’s effect on clarifying what he saw as God’s plan and work in his life while at McKean, he said, “Everything just starts to look like it's all part of God's plan.” He further offered, regarding the continuance of that plan to his post-release experience, “Like I was destined to do what I'm doing right now. I just completed a four-year mentoring program for a faith-based organization.” Thus, for a subset of participants, spirituality in the form of faith in God was identified as a key element of the transformation they experienced during the McKean coaching program. And, although the program did not include an overt spiritual curriculum element, for that subset the pathway to incubation of hope within their beings ran directly through the formation and advancement of their relationships with God.

Summary of Incubating Hope from Within the Person

While simultaneously benefiting from external incubators of hope, participants experienced incubation of hope within themselves as the coaching program fostered an introspection conducive to hope formation. As participants applied the coaching tools, this internal incubation produced changes in their beliefs about themselves consistent with self-

efficacy development Bandura (1989) described as "self-generated influences" and "people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over events that affect the lives" (p. 1175).

As they began to do the work of becoming pathway providers by recruiting other McKean residents to join the coaching program (while also launching the HCP), participants began to experience increasing dignity. Changes in belief included elevating the value participants ascribed to themselves as they began to consider how they could help others.

Multiple participants experienced a deepening of their relationships with God, some seeing Warden Morris' presence in their lives as an act of God. Although the program did not have a formal religious element, participants expressed their sense of God's involvement in their coaching program experience. Such belief in God's involvement, described by Armando as "God's plan," highlights the depth of personal introspection that occurred among some participants, penetrating to the innermost parts of their beings, wrestling with their low hope mentalities, and incubating hope within.

Hoping

A fourth theme represented the ability to develop hope, in particular a hopeful attitude toward future goals and the expectation of attainment (Snyder et al., 1991). This was central to the transformation process experienced by participants. The ability to manifest the sub elements of hoping, represented by second order codes agency exercise and pathway taking, were results of the third second order code (i.e., mindset shift) emerging from the hope incubation process.

Shifting Mindset

Participants described the coaching programs' transformative effect upon their mindsets. Kevin captured the importance of manning the mind's gate: "We learned that basically, your input, the things that you put into your mind, whether it's a book you read, TV shows you watch,

music, and listening to the environmental influence." Thus, participants learned to be careful what they were allowing to enter their minds, whether through media exposure, other elements, or people to whom they allowed to influence their thinking.

Eventually, they learned that it was possible to control their thoughts. One program graduate, Jeff, an African America, age 50-60, who operates his own coaching practice, put it this way: "I understood that I had more control over my thoughts. Yeah, I realized too that anytime I was in trouble, I was panicking in my head." By encouraging formation of the habit of thinking before responding to stimuli, this approach stands in contrast to the habit of instinctually reacting to environmental stimuli. Learning to think carefully before acting didn't always come easily, as it was necessary to break patterns embedded from years of learned behavior. Josh captured this journey when he said,

> *The cultural conditioning that got us to the state that we were in to lead to our frustration is going to take a system and many months and years of undoing and putting new great habits and tools in our life. So, if you think about some of the other programs, I hear some of the cookie cutter or kind of low doses of intervention where you just kind of do for weeks or 12 weeks. I mean, are we realistic and thinking that that's going to undo years of cultural conditioning that led us to that point of the mindsets that led us to that point? No, it's not. It's not realistic…. the aggressive kind of grinding it out day in day out and working on these mindsets and putting these transformational tools in our life over the long haul. In fact, making a difference.*

The McKean program required learnings to be put into action, including development of personal action plans that held participants accountable for putting the tools they acquired into practice. Initial cohort graduates recognized the need for a lengthy reinforcement period to foster healthy habits. As they worked with Warden Morris to curate the McKean HCP, a lengthy reinforcement period was inherently part of the 1.5-year coaching curriculum duration for residents who chose to progress to graduation as certified coaches.

Agency Exercise

Participants experienced low agency (the will to do something) during their pre-coaching program experience, perhaps reinforced by the limited opportunities available to them relative to non-incarcerated individuals. For example, mealtimes, bedtimes, and other activities were scheduled. Yet, within this limited environment, coaching program participants found healthy ways to exercise agency. Jeff captured the development of agency muscle at McKean:

> *After making the transition from society into these institutions, the first thing I learned was that I wasn't in control of anything. That was my first intellectual breakthrough for myself. That was my first lesson in prison - that I controlled absolutely nothing. I regained my control after understanding what coaching was all about.*

The ability to set goals and pursue them was clearly demonstrated. Pepe described his experience with the program's goal setting tools as follows: "It (coaching program) helped me achieve it. The first thing was actually planning and making small goals. At the beginning, I have goals that were SMART, that were fully attainable within a period of time that I want." Participants found creative ways to add value by helping others through agency exercise. Armando stated,

> *Starting to realize that we need to create more programs here, so I joined in with another gentleman, and he was a Spanish GED tutor. And we kind of teamed up and started creating our own curriculum for another class and got permission from them. I certainly believed in what they (coaching program facilitators) did for me and how it helped me that it would help others, and I kind of jumped in and went full, kind of, full force on trying to get the information out to others themselves; prepare them for the next level for their lives.*

Additionally, the program called participants to set specific goals, such as establishing a healthy schedule, which is the path Ron took. He offered,

> *Now for the person who goes through life coaching and now you have goals. Okay, I will be reading for an hour at this time. I will be working out at this time. I will put this much in investing into my family. Now you're utilizing the time that was given for the best of your ability instead of somebody telling you - 'I allow you to do this.'*

Participants were encouraged to use their shifted mindsets to explore healthy agentic pathways that were available to them within their current environment. The mindset shift and subsequent expression of agency represented an activation of hope that released the individual from the self-perpetuating low hope mindset that accepted the notion of little option for agency exercise.

Taking the Pathway

Working synergistically with their willingness to exercise agency and as an outflow of their shifting mindsets, participants embarked upon new pathways (the way forward). Alan, one of the members of the initial Pioneer cohort, described the pathway taking actions he (and others) took to ensure future generations of McKean residents had opportunity to experience the transformational power of the coaching program**:**

> *Over time, you know, those other life plans came into play, and we as that core group, were constantly trying to look ahead and plan on how we were going to maintain continuity. We took on the responsibility of being those key stakeholders and leaders, to pass it on from one generation of coaches to the next.*

The work of Alan and other members of the initial cohort resulted in the establishment of the McKean HCP. Armando, another Pioneer who worked alongside Alan to develop HCP, put it this way: "(We) really took time to try to move this project forward." Alan and Armando's comments captured the posture of proactivity toward pathway taking and the willingness to invest discretionary effort that graduates of the coaching program demonstrated. The impact upon them was such that they embraced a pathway of not only becoming resident stewards of the coaching program, which is laudable, but of becoming pioneers of the broadly offered HCP. Participants took pathways in addition to developing and implementing the HCP, such as Jason, who leveraged learnings from the program and his background in mathematics to enhance his

practice as a math educator at McKean, and Armondo, who used his musical gifts to lead the praise and band.

Summary of Hoping

As participants' mindsets shifted, they increasingly began to exercise agency and take pathways**.** By doing so, they moved to "the other side of the excusing process**"** (Snyder, 2002, p. 249) to leave their lifestyle of surviving and go on offense with the ability to visualize goals and believe that those goals could be achieved**.** This is remarkable, given the agency and pathway limiting realities of prison. Perhaps the most powerful singular evidence of hope formation leading to goal pursuit was the establishment of the HCP. In the context of a low-hope mentality that was pervasive among McKean residents, coaching program graduates were successful in developing a facility-wide coaching curriculum offering that attracted new generations of participants who subsequently experienced hope formation and transformation.

Transforming

Central to the research question is advancing understanding of the transformation process experienced by participants in the McKean coaching program. While arguably all elements of the process model after the offering of the coaching program by Warden Morris are part of the transformation process, some elements appear to be at the core of the transformation experience. Thus, this fifth theme captures those elements include expressing self-efficacy, redeveloping of identity, demonstrating accountability, relating with others, and developing future orientation.

Redeveloping of Identity

As participants' mindsets shifted and they began hoping, they started developing a vision of who they wanted to be relative to who they had been**.** Such identity redevelopment manifested as a key element of the coaching program**.** One participant, Kyle, remarked,

> *What's the distance between who I am now and who I really want to be, and what work needs to be done?[highly animated with hands and head motions] That's that concept of coaching to the gap. And so, it was so transformational, you know. If I could juxtapose all programs against coaching, all programs were educational, coaching was transformational.*

The coaching program exposed an identity gap and proved vital to helping participants answer Kyle's question by providing tools that aided in identity redevelopment. Scott put it this way:

> *I knew I didn't want to commit crime anymore, but I knew I had to almost learn how to function again. Yeah, because, you know, criminality is a lifestyle. Yes, so you almost have to learn a new lifestyle. So, coaching came at a time when I was actually looking for that new lifestyle. So, coaching was almost like an answer for me.*

Program participants were learning a new lifestyle and putting it into practice at McKean. The coaching program became more than an educational endeavor with the promise of incremental improvement in one's lived experience. It rather manifested as a becoming. Kyle further described this intertwining of the program with the identity redevelopment process as follows:

> *Coaching is not just a skill, it's not just a practice, it's not just the occupation. When you're living it the way that it was given to us from Susan, it becomes a lifestyle, you know. You're not looking at, 'How do I practice these skills to help others?' You look at it as, 'How do I become this?' It's a becoming. It's a whole. You become a different person, a different individual, and that individual that you become and that you cultivate is the individual that you take into everything that you do. So, whether you're coaching or whether you're at the helm of the ship as a CEO, whether you're an entrepreneur, just developing an idea and you're interacting socially with people, you become a different person.*

Core to the transformation process, identities were redeveloped. Importantly, that redevelopment included individuals' concepts of their selves (Haesen et al., 2017).

Expressing Self-efficacy

Mindset shifts, hoping, and identity redevelopment all occurred during the nascent stages of self-efficacy formation. As noted earlier, self-efficacy in the literature is defined as one's belief in their own capacity to behave in ways that contribute to achieving performance goals (Bandura, 1977). As identities began to redevelop, participants began to express self-efficacy in a

more fulsome way, further fueling the transformation process. Alan described this developing expression of self-efficacy:

> *(The coaching program) gave me the courage to focus on me becoming the person that I felt I was always intended to be, living that purpose out, even inside prison and even if it meant that I would never be released. It gave me, I'm gonna say yeah, the courage, the courage to live that way that defied expectations of you know, how individuals like myself and others and just in prison are supposed to act are supposed to live.*

The sense program participants had that they were free to be their transformed selves, their willingness to do so, and their having the courage to do so, showed self-efficacy expression in the face of what was perceived by some participants as opposition to their behaving differently from others within McKean. This opposition, and its strengthening impact upon self-efficacy formation, was described by Kyle:

> *The opposition was so extremely important. It was like adding extra weight on the bar. It increased our resistance, and it speaks to our ability to function where we are now in our respective careers etcetera and meet all of the obstacles and oppositions and contentions and be able to look at look them in the face with a smile and say, 'okay, you know, opposition showed up. So, I know who I need to show up as, and I know I can, because I've done it, and it's been tried and true.'*

Kyle's comments represent a progression of self-efficacy from its nascent form to one that had the strength to face opposition. This obstacle immunity, behaving much like muscles do in response to weightlifting, being further strengthened through facing opposition, was vital to an improved lived experience for participants during their time at McKean. As Scott expressed, "So, for me, coaching was a life changer, and it changed the way I was doing my time. You know, now I had a bigger purpose." Established self-efficacy resulted in a form of obstacle immunity and was critical to preparing participants who would become returning citizens to successfully navigate the post-release environment.

Demonstrating Accountability

As participants' transformations blossomed, they began to demonstrate accountability. That accountability began with holding themselves accountable for past actions. As Matt stated, "Learning myself and being accountable for the mistakes and things that I made (before having) learned how to respond." Pepe similarly offered, "Yeah, and it (coaching) just made me realize that the only person that should be held accountable was myself. Yeah. That was nobody's fault but my own." This owning of past mistakes served as a stimulant to behavior change, encouraging program participants to do the work necessary to experience transformation. As Carl put it, "But that's what I do. Some people say, 'you fake it until you make it.' I'm not faking it. I'm doing the work, and everything else."

The transformation experienced by the participants who became returning citizens was operational prior to release. Scott said,

> *We came to the conclusion that, you know, we're going to start acting as if, you know, we were already successful, that we were already, doing the things that we had to do in life to make the people that we come in contact with better, which coaching is about, but we had to do it in an institutional setting.*

Participants recognized that to transform, they needed to practice the behaviors of the persons they wanted to become and held each other accountable for doing so. Part of this practice included outreach to others within McKean who were not in the program. Ron explained this outreach:

> *If you're seeing a guy who's just doing time, you're not taking any initiative to invest in becoming a better person while you're doing time. The time is doing you when it's time to go in that cell. So, we caught those guys that just stuck, become zombies, just living dead. You're allowed in the day room, eight hours a day, that's where they're going to be. The time is doing you. Eventually going to get fat and get high blood pressure and be locked in and you could tell me everything that's happening on TV. The time is doing you.*

The repugnancy of the notion of "the time doing you" to Ron is a powerful word picture capturing the transformation experienced by participants relative to their prior existences of surviving in the zone of self-perpetuating low hope. Their transformations were so substantial that they expressed accountability for others within their ecosystem, while also demonstrating accountability to their fellow program participants.

Relating with Other People

Changes in the way participants related to others was evidence of their transformation**.** For some, this included a vocabulary makeover**. A**s Jeff expressed**,** "I learned how to communicate a thought**.** Yeah, my vocabulary was twisted back then." Others learned how to converse through thoughtful inquiry and effective listening**.** Clint, a Black participant, age 40-55, who helps operate a business and does reentry coaching for returning citizens, put it this way**:**

> *That (coaching program) allowed me to now know how to deal with people, know how to ask certain different types of questions and deal with people in a certain type of manner, and I needed to begin to understand people better and to begin to understand how to listen more and ask a particular type of questions in order to receive more information.*

The transformation experience included learning to seek to understand others. As participants expressed such others orientation, doors opened to authentic human experience. Kyle recalled a highly authentic moment during the program: "All three of us were crying, real tears, and it was unapologetic. It was comfortable, to cry, to be real, to have that sacred space in that moment." This moment of vulnerability connotes a type of positive peer pressure toward vulnerability that was part of participants' experiences with the program. Alan captured another instance of vulnerability:

> *It's learning how to utilize touch [puts hand over heart] and for me, that too, was an essential element of my personal transformation and the damage that had been done and cultivating antisocial behaviors for the first decade. And now taking down those walls and reconnecting with people, building that trust - like maybe the holding hand during a prayer.*

That the program extended to relating to others through proper use of physical touch, highlighting the healing power that can flow from such, is antithetic to the hurtful use of touch that often accompanies criminal behavior. These (perhaps unexpected) tender moments within the walls of McKean bring palpability to the extent of transformation experienced by those who participated in the coaching program.

Developing Future Orientation

As the transformation unfolded, participants were encouraged to orient their thoughts toward the future**.** This future orientation began before release and extended to the post-release environment**.** Carl, in describing the program**,** said, "That's actually one of the things, acting as if, by, stepping into the future." This ability to transport to the future was associated with a release from past experiences that were serving as restraints, impeding psychological transformation**.** Alan put it this way**:**

> *But as strange as this may sound, it was the first time in my life as well, that I had a sense of peace, because I was able to carve out that space to focus on myself, to let go of much of the trauma from my past, to cut off all those unhealthy relationships, to do the work that I needed on myself - physical, mental, emotional-- to do all of that difficult work. I let go of that and started with being freed of those anchors.*

Peace through releasing the past contributed to orienting participants' thinking toward the future. For example, participants began preparing future returning citizens for release. Juan said, "When guys are six months prior to release, we're already helping them get their social security number, their birth certificates, things that are, that seemed like such a small thing." These "small things" were conducive to post release thriving as an outflow of participants' pre-release future orientations.

Future orientation extended to participants' experiences as returning citizens. Having crossed the release threshold. Ron spoke to his thinking: "So when I got released in 2019, I had

my goals and my plans, and I set out to take two jobs." Such high specificity future orientation at the point of release suggests that participants had thought carefully about how they would leave prison and enter the post-release environment, which indicates the presence of a hopeful momentum deriving from goal pursuit. Carl, describing his experience, said, "I'm starting from scratch. Yes. You know, I have my own apartment. I bought my own car, even though it's a 2019 Honda Accord, but it's a standard." Entry into the post-release environment required returning citizens to engage in a material and financial bootstrapping effort that would test the strength of the hope and self-efficacy within their redeveloped identities.

Summary of Transforming

The process of change that was induced through participants' experiences with the McKean coaching program produced a transformation. The previously described sub-elements of this transformation, namely expressing self-efficacy, redeveloping of identity, demonstrating accountability, relating with others, and developing future orientation, represent a journey from surviving to thriving. This transformation journey was fueled by hope formation and the ability to sustain a hopeful approach toward goals as participants developed a vision of who they wanted to be relative to who they had been. Participants' transformations had their beginnings in McKean, catalyzed and incubated by the coaching program and manifesting in a fulsome way prior to release. This fulsome manifestation provided momentum, enabling participants who became returning citizens to carry their transformed identities into a larger society.

Thriving

Participants' lived experiences in the post-release environment provided a measure of the coaching program's efficacy in fostering psychological transformation that enhanced their quality of life as returning citizens within larger society. Evidence flowing from participants'

descriptions of their post-release experiences, when contrasted to their pre-incarceration and pre-coaching program incarceration experiences and supported by an extraordinarily low recidivism rate, suggested that they were thriving, constituting the final theme that emerged in the analysis. This relative thriving manifested in the form of their living within society in ways that allowed them to enjoy positive interactions with others and employ their abilities productively. Six second order codes were identified supporting this form of living including: family and peer support, employment success, occupation and roles post-release, reintegration journey, living with momentum, and wellness evidences.

Family and Peer Support Network

Family and peer support networks were important structures for returning citizens**.** Strengthening of family relationships began for some prior to release**. A**s Armando put it,

> *Prior to release, that journey has already started, right? You're already trying to mend relationships, kind of strengthen relationships with your family and loved ones, and so the reintegration journey kind of started while preparing for release.*

The coaching program's effect upon participants impacted their family relationships prior to and following release. Kyle's description of this effect included application of the tools acquired in the program to enhance communication:

> *The effects of our relationships with our families and everybody who's gone through this (coaching program) and their connections with their families, and how that improved on the experience of actually doing time. Having a better relationship and knowing how to communicate better in an incarcerated setting with loved ones on the outside, down to the actual reintegration process. Some of the coaching principles and the new mindsets that we brought to the table made for a whole different reintegration process for a great many of us.*

Warden Morris, who had seen many people reenter society during her career, offered, "The family, and the relationships, is just so, so important to that whole reintegration." Further offering insight into her view of the primacy of family relationships relative to other post-release

impactors of the quality of the returning citizens' experiences, she offered, "The family support … would come before everything else, occupationally, employment wise."

While improved family relationships enhanced the post-release experience, for some, entering the post-release family context represented a transition from the surrogate family experience they had known through the supporting role program peers had played within McKean. Describing this transition and expressing the depth of the McKean relationships, despite not being biologically related, Armando said,

> *Kyle and Alan are my brothers, and they were one of my, if not the primary, components to my support system, while behind, I guess, the fence. We kind of get separated, and the support system switches, but at the end of the day, they were my primary support while in McKean.*

Although the McKean peer network experience predated release, its presence and impact extended into the post-release environment, positively contributing to post-release thriving.

Employment Success

The process of gaining employment after release can be extremely difficult for returning citizens, and the experience for returning citizens who participated in the McKean coaching program was not without challenges. Yet, many managed to gain and maintain employment, some very quickly. Juan offered, "I got out on a Thursday. On Monday, I was already working." Even with a short path to post-release employment, transitional housing was a reality for some. Ron described his housing situation while holding two jobs: "I was working at [large, global company] and [large, global company] as well living in a halfway house for a year." Employment success, in the form of holding two jobs at large companies while living in a halfway house for a year, required maintenance of hopeful momentum derived from the transformation Ron experienced, catalyzed by the coaching program.

One participant, Kevin, attributed his post-release employment success to the McKean coaching program: “And in five months, I got promoted to seasonal human resource specialist. And that was all because of my coaching.” Kevin, in gaining career traction, demonstrated a form of thriving in the workplace, which again he attributed to the McKean coaching program:

> *When I first came home, the only employment opportunity for me when I moved back was a $9 and hour job at halfway house. Coaching allowed me to see the end goal. Start with the end in mind and not being so caught up on the fact that I'm only getting $9 and hour.*

Rather than being overwhelmed by the compensation realities related to starting a career at the bottom of the ladder, Kevin was able to engage in sustained hopeful goal pursuit, honed first in the McKean context, by exercising agency, taking pathways, and expressing self-efficacy in ways that led to employment success. He further offered in describing his demeanor in the workplace: “Everything I approached, I approached with the coach approach.”

The exercise of hope generating agentic behavior in the post-release environment led others to engage in entrepreneurial endeavors to successfully create employment. Ron offered, “We opened up a boutique. A boutique – that’s where I am at now.” Carl expressed a similar sentiment, “I’ve had my LLC open for almost two years now.” Such self-starting behaviors leading to employment success are a form of post-release career self-efficacy that was demonstrated by participants. Ron, while expanding upon the scope of his entrepreneurial success, said:

> *So, like I'm engaged. I have a child. I have a business. I'm off* paper [completed parole and no longer under legal supervision] *and free. And I know none of that wouldn't be possible if I didn't have the training of life coaching because I never would have learned how to think like this and properly plan and strategize and see the big picture and keep the end in mind to move forward.*

The ability to successfully gain and maintain employment upon release offered a stream of income to enable other important post-release experiences of success, such as supporting one's children.

Occupation and Roles Post-release

The types of occupations participants entered following reentry varied**.** As noted, some became entrepreneurs and others worked supporting large companies**.** Carl described**,**

> *I went from a halfway house, monitor on my leg and all that, to getting my own apartment and working for a car dealer. Then I'm going back to school to get my tractor/trailer license, and I've been driving for* [large, global company] *for 18 months now for a contract driver.*

Some worked in the education arena. Matt, who in describing his current occupation and role, said, "I work in education now. I'm at my part-time job now. I'm the Diversity Equity and Inclusion coordinator and the Program Director of a program at the community college."

Others parlayed their experience as coaching program students to move to coaching others as a post-release occupation. Kevin offered, "I do coaching right now. I do it on the streets. I got life coaching business on the street, directly in the nonprofit organization - will be running the coach program in the inner-city neighborhoods." Carl, who in addition to his driving job was available to transmit coaching learnings to others, offered: "We started a nonprofit, reentry coaching, so most of us, that's what we're doing." Describing the honing of his instructional skills, he also said, "I've taken and facilitated over 200 classes. I became an adjunct professor. I'm a certified life coach." The breadth of occupation and role types participants engaged in upon release, several with a prevailing tendency toward helping others succeed in life, suggested that participants experienced post-release thriving with respect to occupation.

Reintegration Journey

Although the reintegration journey experienced by participants was bolstered heavily by healthy family and peer support networks and successful employment and occupation experiences, the journey presented a variety of challenges**.** The loss of the physical presence of their peer support system was one of those challenges**.** Jeff described it this way**:**

> *So, when I came home it was very difficult. Very difficult [with emphasis and moving head side to side], and I didn't have all the coaches to coach me to my situation once I touched down. The majority of my friends was still locked up. Yeah, so I couldn't just get in contact with them when I needed to. So, I had to be on my own out here, but what kept me strong was that they sent me out here carrying the torch.*

Another challenge was with daily economic transactions. As Ron noted, "The whole time, with everything, get my credit score together, building the relationships with the banks…. I understood that my felonies was a reality." Yet, participants' willingness to "carry the torch," generated through carceral transformation experiences, aided them in meeting these challenges without being overcome by them.

Other challenges were associated with the realities of technological advancements in larger society that had occurred over a period of decades. Kevin offered,

> *So, when I went to TSA [at the airport], they asked me to go to the thing that spins. She asked me to stand to the side. So, I automatically put my arms up to be patted down. And she said, 'no baby this is not a metal detector.' And that's when it finally hit me that I was home. I said, 'wow,' you know, but I didn't know how to do anything. Or how to get chips from a concession stand. I didn't know how to get my ticket. I didn't know how to turn the phone on. I did not know anything. I mean, the cycle just repeated itself for months, to the point where I think, crossing the street, I was in tears.*

The technological changes in society were not the only sources of distress upon reentry. Alex expressed,

> *I didn't know about pronouns. I didn't know about gender and sexuality. We weren't taught these things. So many of us came home making huge mistakes. Okay? My name is X [Sighs]. I guess that my pronouns are "they" and "their"? But in my mind, I'm thinking how can I be saying 'them?' That's, that's not grammatically correct.'*

Thus, reentry into an altered social ecosystem, where even the application of pronouns was being challenged by attempted redefinitions, was another source of distress. Still, despite these challenges, returning citizens demonstrated the ability to face them in a hope-driven way as part of a successful reintegration journey.

Living with Momentum

The notion of living with momentum describes the way participants operated in the post-release environment in a sustained cycle of hopeful agency**:** exercise and pathway-taking that perpetuated their thriving**.** This momentum allowed them to meet the challenges within their reintegration journey and show evidences of wellness**.** Kevin captured this hopeful attitude as follows, "It hasn't been a great two weeks, but I know that I'm blessed to be here. I know that tomorrow is going to be a better day. Like I'm looking forward to stuff." Here**,** Kevin showed thankfulness for the present and hope for the future**.**

Another returning citizen who participated in the program, Jeff, described self-regulating mindset management associated with not reacting to things that had the potential to upset him: "So when I feel that thing bubbling up, yeah. I started before I felt it, and let it go." This cognitive recognition of emerging destructive behavior stands in contrast to the instinctive reacting that characterized participants' pre-transformation lives. Kevin described his prior way of living: "So my environment taught me how to react in a violent manner, to somebody bumped into me, and I've been taught to react without thinking." He explained that the coaching program taught participants how to replace reacting with thinking – a practice they carried into society as returning citizens. Ron captured the veracity of this post-release living momentum:

> *So, you can be a better person, period. So once that happens, it doesn't really matter what people say or hate on you. You get gratification, because once they do acknowledge that you are a better person, they always come back and then you take that relationship.*

The ability to endure the doubters and select relationships that acknowledged transformation showed confidence in one's redeveloped identity, which was conducive to post-release wellness.

Wellness Evidences

Evidences of post release wellness manifested in multiple ways among coaching program participants who returned to society**.** Primary indicators, such as improved family relationships, employment success, and the ability to face and overcome obstacles have been highlighted. Additional evidence of wellness was also apparent in participants, many of which occurred prior to release, but were germane to post-release thriving**.** One of those pieces of evidence was in the social arena, as expressed by Armando, "I guess I got to a point where I didn't see religion. I didn't see race. I mean, I didn't see any demographic, right. I see my brother and I want to spend quality time with him." This sort of demographic blindness in carceral friendships enhanced Armando's well-being while in prison and extended to his experience as a returning citizen**.** Similarly, regarding the program facilitators, Alex offered, "Susan and Emily are these little, charismatic white women. Every person in the program is a person of color. And we all love them equally."

Participants cited the impact of the program toward enhancing the quality of family relationships, as highlighted by Kyle: "I think it [coaching program] made some of us run back and try to repair some damage in some old relationships… You can call and talk to my daughter; you can talk to some of my children." Additionally, Alan offered regarding his relationship with his wife: "The coaching program, which allowed us the communication skills that I honestly think are the reason our relationship was able to continue to thrive through periods of adversity,

both inside and post incarceration." Such enhanced family relationships proved integral to participants' re-entry wellness.

Other evidences of returning citizens' wellness emerged from the research, including Kyle's eagerness to advance his education and write about his story, potentially contributing to scholarly work. Kyle, following review of scholarly literature, drafted the following as a first writing effort:

> *Four years ago, I was confined to a cell, bound by mistakes that seemed to define me. Today, I stand on the other side as an executive coach, leading others towards freedom; not the kind unlocked by keys, but the kind that lives within. My journey from incarceration to identity taught me that true transformation isn't about escaping where you've been but about discovering the power within you to redefine who you are. Coaching helped me reclaim that power, and now it's the tool I use to help others break free.*

He further stated, "The title of this article is, *The Intrinsic Value of Coaching: A Personal Journey from Incarceration to Identity*, and I would love to keep writing and have some support in this writing process." Through taking nascent steps toward the emerging goal of advancing his education to the point of contributing to scholarly articles, Kyle demonstrated a high level of post release momentum toward agency exercise and pathway taking in pursuit of goals that is consistent with the notion of thriving through engaging his interests and employing his abilities productively.

Additional evidences that were expressed prior to release included the program's ability to drive self-assessment. Victor described it this way: "You got to find what you're passionate about. You take a good look at yourself and mirror. …It was like that rocket that helped me to catapult. …Things are much clearer these days." For Victor, the coaching program served as a "mirror" that had a clarifying effect upon him regarding identifying what he was passionate about. This self-awareness was then carried into the post-release setting as an aid to thriving.

Summary of Thriving

As participants reentered society as returning citizens, they began living in ways that allowed them to enjoy positive interactions with others and employ their abilities productively. When crossing the release threshold as returning citizens, participants faced the challenges of loss of the physical presence of their peer network and entry into an altered secular culture that was significantly different from their pre-incarceration experience. As their reintegration journeys unfolded, they faced and met these challenges successfully, manifesting multiple wellness evidences, including the ability to reintegrate into society while engaging in the process of foraging for work (Sugie, 2018). They were able to obtain employment in a variety of roles, yielding successes such as the launch of new businesses and social service programs, holding multiple jobs with large companies, and realizing advancement within a company.

Subgroup Comparison of Transformative Processes

If the emergent process model rings true, it stands to reason that those with more intense involvement in coaching would progress further and experience a greater magnitude of the later phases of the process (i.e., Transforming and Thriving) than those with less involvement. To explore this possibility, experiences of those in the Pioneering Cohort (the initial participants who had greater involvement in the program and went on to develop and deliver the HCP to their peers; $n = 6$) were compared to the experiences of the Next Gen Cohort (those that had completed the HCP; $n = 10$). Narrative contrast analysis (comparing individual narratives holistically across the two cohorts) provided evidence that this was the case. Table 6 presents a summary of similarities in individual narratives within each subgroup for each thematic segment of the model, as well as differences between subgroups.

Table 6

Narrative Comparisons Across Cohorts

Model Thematic Segment	Characterization of Segment	Evidences of Similarities and Differences Among Cohorts
Surviving	Doing what was necessary to exist within a social ecosystem that reinforced lack of motivation for aspiring to bettering their lives through goal attainment	Both Pioneers and NextGen mentioned that prior to being incarcerated and early on in their incarceration, they felt that they were just trying to get by each day and felt little motivation to engage in agentic behavior toward betterment. We saw this tendency at slightly higher levels among Next Gen, with comments such as Ron's – "If I wasn't doing what I needed to do, and opportunity presented itself, I (without coaching tools) wouldn't have been able to do what needed to be done."
Incubating hope (including from inside the person and outcome the person)	Coaching as fostering an introspection and ecosystem conducive to hope formation	Pioneers showed substantially higher expression with nuanced understanding of the mechanics of how the coaching program aided hope incubation, such as agency conveyance, as expressed by Armando – "I think that's really the fundamental principle behind coaching, right, is someone believing in the in the coachee. The coach believing in the coachee and helping them reaffirm all the good qualities of their person, that they're able to feel good about that and really start utilizing their strengths."
Hoping	One's expectation of goal attainment	Pioneers showed higher expression in the form of agency exercise and pathway taking while still incarcerated, resulting in self-efficacy expression and future orientation leading to making plans to maintain the coaching program and create new generations of program graduates, as Adam described – "And over time, you know, those other life plans came into play, and we as that core group, were constantly trying to look ahead and plan on how we were going to maintain continuity. We took on the responsibility of being those key stakeholders and leaders, to pass it on from one generation of coaches to the next."
Transforming	The process of changing in response to coaching	Pioneers showed higher expression in the form of demonstrating accountability for past actions, relating with others transparently, and show the courage to engage in positive relationship building, as expressed by Jeff – "It (coaching) single handedly gave me the knowledge, the courage, and the wisdom to be different," and Scott – "That's been a part of my transformation, is being 100% transparent and living in, you know, my space. Sure, you know, and owning, you know, some of the spaces occupied on my prior life."
Thriving	Living within society in a way that allows one to enjoy positive interactions with others and employ their abilities productively	We saw slightly higher manifestations among Pioneers. Both groups showed strong ability to gain and maintain employment with Pioneers showing marginally greater propensity toward engaging with peers and family in relationship building, as noted by Scott –"They (my children) knew what I was doing was real. So, I didn't have to convince them. I had to come home and convince the other people that never seen me from the moment I was incarcerated to the moment I was released."

As a second examination of this contrast, I turned to frequency counts within individual interview transcripts for each segment in the model (i.e., Surviving, Incubating Hope, Hoping, Transforming, and Thriving). Specifically, a data set was compiled tracking the frequency of occurrences in each individual interview for each first order code, grouped by five themes to create five scores for everyone. For example, the Surviving theme consisted of 29 first order codes (see Appendix F). The score for Surviving for an individual was the number of times that individual's transcript contained any of these 29 first codes that sit within the Surviving theme. Note that the themes Incubating Hope from Inside and Incubating Hope from Outside were combined into a single score for "Incubating Hope" for simplicity and given the relatively small number of codes in each. These scores were then weighted by the total number of words in each individual's interview, to account for the fact that interviews were of different lengths (see Appendix H for raw counts). I then compared the Pioneers' scores for each theme with the Next Gen scores for each theme, based on the normalized subgroup averages, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Summary of Prevalence of Themes by Cohort

	Surviving	Incubating Hope	Hoping	Transforming	Thriving
Pioneers Normalized Average =	**0.041**	**0.172**	**0.058**	**0.139**	**0.101**
Next Gen Normalized Average =	**0.049**	**0.098**	**0.037**	**0.096**	**0.095**
Difference (Pioneers less Next Gen) =	**-0.008**	**0.074**	**0.021**	**0.044**	**0.005**

As can be seen, based on normalized average word counts and narrative contrast analysis, the Pioneers slightly less frequently indicated they were merely surviving, with many Pioneers and Next Gen participants recounting experiences of just trying to survive. This survival mentality manifested in the form of living day to day without setting future goals. Also, there was a lack of future oriented agentic behavior and pathway taking, as participants saw little

incentive to invest in anything other than the present. Thus, opportunities presented for improvement were of little interest.

Pioneers more frequently indicated they had incubated hope, providing nuanced descriptions of the practices taught in the program, how to put them into practice, and how to convey them to others. This understanding of the fundamentals and intent of the program, honed through Pioneers' experiences of progressing from students to teachers (via the HCP), likely accounts for their greater expression of hope incubation. They experienced external and internal hope incubation personally and then served as external sources of hope incubation for Next Gen participants.

Pioneers described more frequently that they were hopeful manifesting in the form of agency exercise and pathway taking while still incarcerated. Rather than engaging in excuse making, they acted consistent with Synder's (2002) notion of getting to the other side of excuse making by setting Type 1 goals that they pursued because of their potential to benefit others. Next Gen participants experienced that benefit in the form of their experiences and transformations derived from the HCP. Such hopeful actions stand in contrast to Pioneers' pre-coaching program experiences of surviving in a low hope environment. Their hopeful actions were also present in their post-release experiences as demonstrated through their employment and family relationship experiences.

Pioneers described more frequently that they had experienced transformation, mentioning their taking accountability for past actions, relating with others transparently, and expressing the courage to engage in positive relationship building (also evidencing Type 1 goal pursuit). Interesting, Pioneers indicated only slightly more thriving than did the Next Gen participants, as both groups demonstrated strong ability to gain and maintain employment upon

release. Pioneers showed marginally greater tendencies toward post-release relationship building, perhaps due to their greater experience with applying, prior to release, the relationship tools learned through the coaching program.

In summary, these comparisons supported the logic of the model, that those who engaged more intensively through not only completing the coaching program as part of the initial cohort but also participating in curation and facilitation of the HCP, had progressed more completely through the model. These findings indicate that intensity of coaching exposure and use promoted the degree to which transformation occurred.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research began with a review of the psychological transformation literature, focusing on hope theory and self-efficacy theory, and determining that the treatment of hope and self-efficacy formation within the carceral setting was limited, particularly with respect to use of cognitive coaching to foster such formation. Prior literature has provided little understanding as to how cognitive coaching, commonly used to aid in career success, might enhance reentry success for returning citizens. The aim of the current research was to advance this understanding of coaching within the carceral environment and how it might relate to psychological transformation, potentially deterring recidivism upon release. A study was conducted to understand how participation in a specific cognitive coaching program impacted prison residents. This study involved interviewing 21 individuals associated with such a program, including 16 returning citizens who had participated in coaching at an all-male federal prison.

I found returning citizens experienced meaningful psychological transformation through their participation in the coaching program, along with evidence supporting the contribution of that transformation to their success as returning citizens. Six themes emerged from the analysis of the data: surviving, incubating hope from outside the person, incubating hope from within the person, hoping, transforming, and thriving. I developed a process model that seeks to explain the transformation. This model points to several important theoretical contributions for theories of hope, self-efficacy, and thriving. After discussing these theoretical contributions, I present implications for practice, limitations, and future research directions.

Implications for Theory

Research on workplace coaching is emergent, with empirical evidence suggesting efficacy, but containing little theoretical form, and it is unclear how that research has informed

practice (Jones et al., 2016). Though significant effort has been placed toward inmate education and vocational skill development (Chappell, 2003), there is little to be found in the literature regarding the impact of cognitive coaching upon inmates' abilities to develop the skills necessary to navigate an open society. If coaching is potentially efficacious in corporations, it would be helpful to understand whether it has the potential to be efficacious in the prison context to, for example, incubate hope among inmates. Thus, there existed an opportunity to contribute to understanding the breadth of applicability of theories related to psychological transformation while advancing nascent understanding of how cognitive coaching programs within the prison context impact citizens' abilities to craft and realize goals.

Findings extend theories of hope, self-efficacy, and thriving. Prior literature on these concepts has advanced understanding of how individuals' capabilities to envision and realize goals are formed and strengthened or weakened. Additionally, as corroborated by this study, there is much evidence that the generation of hope significantly increases the likelihood of goal attainment (Snyder, 2002). I elaborate on theoretical implications in these areas below.

Hope Theory

Hope theory has been applied across a broad range of strata, including academics (Cheavens et al., 2019), human services (Hellman et al., 2014), trauma sufferers (Laslo-Roth et al., 2022), health care facilities (Pavlakou, 2020), and leaders (Peterson & Luthans, 2003). In each case, hope was found to be positively correlated with desired outcomes, such as superior academic performance. Despite this broad application, prior to this study, limited evidence was found regarding its applicability to prison inmates. Analysis of the data derived from our study revealed three important implications for hope theory: (1) generalizability extends to the carceral environment, (2) hope can be curated through a synergistic incubation process that includes both

external and internal sources of incubation, and (3) the intentional, formalized, structured approach of the cognitive coaching program aided hope formation.

Within the scarce scholarly evidence, there were clues to the potential of hope curation in prison. Wright et al. (2023) indicated that hope was critical for survival among men and women serving reducible life sentences. Additional support was provided by a study which examined recovery homes for formerly incarcerated persons with addictions (Dekhtyar et al., 2012) that suggested the lower the level of hope among those returning citizens, the higher the likelihood of reincarceration. Taken together, the findings from these studies suggested that hope might not only be curated in prison but may be an impactful factor in reducing the likelihood of engaging in recidivistic behavior upon release.

The findings from my research indicate that hope can form within the carceral environment. Evidence was found to support the development of both elements theoretically necessary to hope formation: pathways and agency. Participants demonstrated the ability to envision pathways and take them while engaging in agentic thoughts and actions. These results support the generalizability of hope theory to the carceral environment, manifesting first as hopeful goal setting while in prison, and extending to the post-release environment as a potential antidote to temptation to engage in recidivistic behavior and serving as an aid to thriving during the reintegration journey

Further, the findings in the current study are the first that I am aware of that indicate the importance of two primary sources of hope incubation experienced by participants: external and internal. The first source was external to participants. One sub-element of the external incubation, the provision of pathway visibility by Warden Morris, appeared to be a necessary initial disruptor of participants' low hope existences. As Warden Morris put forward the

opportunity to join the coaching program, consistent with the origins of hope theory, she effectively encouraged residents to move beyond excuse making (Synder et al., 1983) and take the coaching pathway. This external source of incubation, when combined with the externally derived incubating power of being in a community of other coaching program pathway takers, provided necessary stimulus to begin engaging in goal setting. The initial cohort manifested nascent forms of agency exercise (the will) and pathway taking (the way) when they engaged in setting and achieving the small goal of completing the initial eight-week program.

The second source of hope incubation occurred within participants. As participants applied the coaching tools and began experiencing increased dignity, they began setting larger life goals (Schonick et al., 2023; Snyder, 2002), some of which were realized prior to being released, such as the HCP offering that was curated and facilitated by the Pioneer coaching program graduates. And, although the program did not include an overt spiritual curriculum element, for a subset of participants the pathway to incubation of hope within their being ran directly through the formation and advancement of their faith in and relationship with God. The program appeared to have opened the door to transparency, authenticity, and repentance which was displayed not only in their relationships with peers, but also in a transformed relationship with God, manifesting in thankfulness toward and confidence in God's presence and working in their lives. One participant began leading the praise and worship band at McKean, which may have amplified other aspects of the coaching program. The powerful effects of such programs were noted by Johnson's (2021) observation that "offender-led religious movements have the potential to foster identity transformation" (p. 7).

The development and implementation of the HCP and leadership of the praise and worship band manifest as a Type 1 goal (Snyder, 2002), which participants pursued because of

their potential to create desirable outcomes for others (and themselves) as opposed to engaging in Type 2 goals (Snyder, 2002) to avoid a negative outcome for themselves. The demonstrated ability to engage in envisioning Type 1 goals and pursuing them successfully in the context of an uncertain future regarding the possibility or timing of release comports with the findings of Wright et al. (2023), supporting the notion that hope generation is possible among prison residents in the absence of release certainty and represents a stark departure from the survival mindset that characterized the pre-coaching program life participants experienced at McKean.

The findings also showed that the program structure, systems, and processes at McKean provided a form of greenhouse for hope incubation, transformation, and dignity formation, consistent with what Gibson et al. (2023) articulate as the dignity conveying power of work. The program's structure included accountability to instructors and fellow cohort members for applying learnings. While educational programming is generally abundant in Federal prisons, some containing elements such as listening skill development (Perrin & Blagden, 2014), no evidence was found in the scholarly literature of the existence of a structured prison-based comprehensive cognitive coaching program that was overtly aimed to develop skills for goal setting and pursuit. Absent this formality, evidence from interviews suggest there would have been no self-assembly and concentration of the incubation forces necessary to penetrate the low-hope ecosystem in a sustainable way. This extends prior research on hope, by indicating the importance of such structure.

The goal pursuit manifested by coaching program participants was not limited to the singular goal of realization of release. Goal pursuit included those hoped to be realized in the context of a carceral based future, effectively the making of a life in prison (Conway, 2023). The formalized program offering created a community context that provided participants the safety

necessary to participate with the warden in this counter cultural endeavor (initial coaching program participation and HCP development), realizing one carceral based goal they set and pursued for themselves: operationalization of the HCP. The HCP was contributory to the identity redevelopment participants experienced as they became active in the facilitation of the program.

The positive impact upon the McKean culture was palpable, and although in a different circumstance, manifested consistently with retrospective findings (Cascio & Luthans, 2014) regarding the metamorphosis that occurred for Nelson Mandela at Robben Island prison in conditions described as oppressive. McKean coaching program participants expressed hoping in the form of engaging in a cycle of agency exercise and pathway taking that launched the HCP and led to their own transformations as well as those of others. When individuals feel that "they are in control of their actions, and that they can self-govern; when they are responsible; believe that they can prevail (i.e., through hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism)" (Cascio & Luthans, 2014, p. 65), they can accomplish things that seem surprising, even in environments that suppress agency and limit pathways.

At Robben Island, there was no formal programmatic structure. Perhaps for some extraordinary prison residents (i.e., Nelson Mandela), such a structure is not necessary for hope curation. Yet for the men of McKean, the findings show the power of a structured effort to foster psychological transformation, giving space for pathway taking and agency exercise in the carceral environment and supporting the notion that such effort increases likelihood of reentry success.

Suggested steps for future research include the use of intervention studies whereby the context (carceral environment) and population are kept constant while one subset of the population participates in a structured, focused cognitive coaching program (such as the McKean

coaching program) and a second subset participates in traditional programming that is generally unstructured regarding cognitive development. Hope formation and transformation could then be assessed and compared among these conditions.

Self-Efficacy

My study served to support the applicability of self-efficacy theory to the carceral environment, with self-efficacy being manifested as part of the transformation experience of participants. One element of that support is found in participants' journeys from surviving in a self-perpetuating low hope environment to actively facilitating a coaching curriculum (HCP) that was offered to all McKean residents. This transformative journey aligns with Bandura's (1977) description of the impact of factors, such as verbal persuasion that contribute to self-efficacy formation: "People are led, through suggestion, into believing they can cope successfully with what has overwhelmed them in the past" (p. 198). Incubators of hope, external to participants, in combination, produced a form of verbal persuasion. Through the suggestion and belief of Warden Morris and cohort peers, participants were led to believe that they could successfully cope with what had overwhelmed them in the past (Bandura, 1977), set goals, and express high commitment to those goals (Bandura, 1989). Warden Morris, and later residents who completed the program and became certified coaches, served to disrupt the low-hope ecosystem through providing of pathway visibility and conveying a sense of agency to incoming program participants.

Prior to their involvement in the coaching program, participants were little practiced at achieving smaller goals in pursuit of larger life goals (Schornick et al., 2023; Snyder, 2002). As a result of a lack of motivation toward and limited experience with taking pathways that had potential to improve wellness, participants found themselves in a self-perpetuating zone of low

hope and in possession of little psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007) and the associated tools that could be used to break free of this zone. Tools such as

> (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond to attain success (Luthans et al., 2007, p. 542) seemed absent.

The effort by participants to curate and facilitate the HCP, coupled with their lack of recidivism, supports self-efficacy theory's implication that "once established, enhanced self-efficacy tends to generalize to other situations in which performance was self-debilitated by preoccupations with personal inadequacies" (Bandura, 1977, p. 195). Such an ambitious undertaking as HCP or a post release future filled with wellness evidences would have been difficult for participants to imagine based upon their descriptions of their pre-coaching program existences, thus adding further support to the applicability of self-efficacy theory to the carceral setting and the generalizability of self-efficacy expression to other situations once established.

However, findings here indicate an important missing piece of the puzzle to growing self-efficacy: the role of identity transformation. Surprisingly, seldom have the concepts of self-efficacy and identity been integrated into a single study. Yet, intrapersonal processes involved in each have the potential to magnify the other and promote even greater motivation, effort and change. Kyle's articulation of "the distance between who I am now and who I really want to be, and what work needs to be done" revealed the internal kindling of a desire for identity modification that in his own words was "transformational." His current profession as a

leadership coach expresses a transformed identity relative to his pre-release, pre-coaching program existence.

The efficacious momentum derived from participants' McKean transformation experiences equipped them to combat stigma associated with their prior carceral identities (Enosh et al., 2013). Kyle's description of coaching as "lifestyle," a "becoming," and a "whole" that contributed to his "becoming a different person" that you "cultivate" indicates a momentum in self-efficacy expression, demonstrating his belief in his ability to behave in ways that allowed him to exercise influence over the events affecting his identity such that his identity could be redeveloped. Similar manifestations were shown through what Alan described as the coaching program giving him "the courage to focus on becoming the person that I felt I was always intended to be." The veracity of Alan's identity transformation was further bolstered when he offered regarding the context in which that reformed identity would be lived: "even inside prison and even if it meant that I would never be released." The McKean program allowed participants to engage in experiences, vicarious experiences, and verbal persuasion that not only led them to cope successfully with things that had overwhelmed them in the past but also realize transformed identities within McKean that persisted into their experiences as returning citizens.

Also, while the process for obtaining and maintaining employment was not an easy one, consistent with earlier findings (Ricciardelli & Mooney, 2018), participants noted the primal role the McKean program had played in enabling them to manifest the behaviors necessary to gain meaningful employment, approaching this challenging job acquisition process with hopeful attitudes consistent with their redeveloped identities and expressing the requisite self-efficacy. Scott's comment regarding "acting as if we were already successful… but we had to do it in an institutional setting" demonstrates the McKean program's emphasis on practicing the practices

that would encourage participants' self-efficacy formation while they were still incarcerated; practices that they would need in abundance as returning citizens. As Ron offered, rather than "just doing time" and letting "the time do you," participants consciously engaged in identity redevelopment by doing what Alan called "the difficult work" to become someone different than who they had been in the past.

The current findings support the notion of a strong interrelationship between identity transformation and self-efficacy formation, thereby extending understanding of self-efficacy theory. However, additional study is needed to understand how identity transformation contributes to self-efficacy formation and whether a person's transformed identity proves malleable upon facing new challenges, even when in possession of an enhanced level of self-efficacy. Additionally, it is unclear from our study the extent to which elements of participants' prior identities were retained as part of their transformed identities, which perhaps could be assessed through a future controlled study that includes identity assessment prior to and after completing a carceral based cognitive coaching curriculum.

Thriving at Work

Findings regarding thriving contribute to the body of literature associated with thriving at work. Spreitzer and her colleagues (2005) defined such thriving as a "psychological state in which individuals experience both a sense of vitality and a sense of learning at work" (p. 538). Their model of the social embeddedness of thriving at work presented agentic behaviors as the engine of such thriving, such that when certain contextual enabling conditions are present (rather than the absence of job-related stressors such as adverse working conditions), the likelihood of thriving increases. Such enabling conditions include those "that encourage decision-making discretion, broad information sharing, and a climate of trust and respect" (p. 540).

The current study extends that theory in important ways. First, I show the applicability of the thriving concept in unusual contexts. Although the importance of context has been acknowledged, the treatment of thriving at work has focused on more traditional work environments, with just one study involving correctional officers (Okros & Vîrgă, 2025) supporting the applicability of the concept toward improving work experiences in a prison environment. No work has been done on thriving among inmates or returned citizens. My study serves to extend and confirm Spreitzer (2005) by showing that coaching program participants experienced both the vitality and learning components of thriving at work, while in the carceral setting at McKean, as expressed by their rich descriptions of their participation in the coaching program. Examining an extreme context (where one might assume thriving would be impossible), I show that what Spreitzer (2005) described as enabling conditions (e.g., decision-making discretion, trust, and respect) can exist for prison residents and be intentionally constructed by prison administrators and residents.

Second, the current study demonstrates the malleability of thriving. Rather than consistent personality characteristics that follows individuals across settings, the study provides evidence that thriving can be built and improved, even under challenging circumstances and when a very low level of thriving is the starting point. This was evidenced by participants' shedding of their low hope existences. Further, thriving momentum continued to post-release. This helped to combat the distressing feelings of incompetence in daily living that are a reality for persons who have experienced long incarcerations. Returning citizens mentioned the massive developments that had occurred while they were incarcerated, with disorienting changes occurring in everything from technology to politics to vernacular. For example, the past 20 years have produced a digital divide (van Dijk, 2006) that creates significant disadvantages for those

who are not practiced in the use of devices such as smart phones and associated applications, which have become second nature for those outside prison. New technologies that prove difficult to master for many in the general population who receive a gradual introduction to their use are even more shocking when foisted upon returning citizens in abundance and with rapidity. Kevin's poignant description of his experience with flying after release highlights the challenges to thriving faced by returning citizens when he said, "When I went to TSA [at the airport], they asked me to go to the thing that spins. So, I automatically put my arms up to be patted down. And she said, 'no baby this is not a metal detector.'" Also, deviations from the pre-incarceration ecosystem were present in language and vernacular. Alex observed, "I didn't know about pronouns. I didn't know about gender and sexuality. We weren't taught these thing." Despite such post-release headwinds to thriving, Kevin and Alex, both Next Gen cohort members, gained and sustained employment. Consistent with their transformations, by replacing reacting with thinking, returning citizens who were participants in the McKean program interacted with others in ways that allowed them to enjoy improved family relationships and successfully navigate their post release environments. Next Gen cohort member Ron's earlier description of the breadth of his post release thriving captures the potential staying power of thriving once established in that he noted that he "never would have learned how to think like this and properly plan and strategize" a part from having gone through the coaching program. Hence, this work further extends understanding of thriving suggesting that once established in the carceral environment it can be transferred to the post-release environment. Ron's McKean experience allowed him to learn how to control his thoughts and engage in productive decision making and goal setting in a hope incubating ecosystem (i.e. enabling conditions) that encouraged the practice of agency exercise and pathway taking in a climate of trust and respect. Upon release, Ron was successful

in applying these learnings to progress beyond parole, start a family, and start a business. Additionally, Pioneer cohort member Jeff's description of the impact of the coaching program's enabling conditions upon his thinking (i.e., "I understood that I had more control over my thoughts. Yeah, I realized too that anytime I was in trouble, I was panicking in my head,") illustrates how a change in thinking (controlled versus panicked) contributed to participants' experiences of thriving at work both while being incarcerated (as participants in the McKean coaching program) and upon release. As much can be gleaned from Jeff's now occupation as a coaching practice owner, supporting the transferability of one's experience of thriving.

This study extends theory regarding thriving by providing evidence of the transferability of thriving from person to person. This unfolded in a dyadic manner in the transfer of thriving from Warden Morris to the Pioneers, and then from Pioneers to Pioneer. But the study also shows a collective 'thriving contagion affect' in that as the Pioneers began to thrive through the HCP, they were able to successfully recruit multiple new cohorts (Next Gen) and encourage members of those cohorts in ways that contributed to thriving experiences for new generations of coaching program participants. A surprising finding that warrants additional attention is that although the Pioneer cohort expressed greater incubating of hope, hoping, and transforming relative to Next Gen, they did not express far greater thriving. One explanation for this is that the greater expressions of hope and transformation (but not thriving) appear to be associated with Pioneers' engagement not only as students in the initial coaching program cohort, but also in their work as curators and facilitators of a McKean-wide coaching curriculum that yielded graduates in the form of the Next Gen cohort. Thereby, Pioneers, relative to Next Gen, through their experiences as both coaching program students and HCP program developer/operators did have greater experience in agency exercise and pathway taking. The similar levels of thriving

across the two cohorts can potentially further be explained by Pioneers' gravitation toward describing the ways in which they, through the coaching program, both experienced thriving and enabled others' thriving through the HCP. They were focused beyond themselves, on the experience of others.

A related explanation pertains to the view of thriving as a collective endeavor, which might supersede individually focused thriving. Merkuž et al. (2014) indicated that little is known about collective thriving, although there is potential in leader-to-team member and team member-to-team member exchanges at work for thriving. The workplace environment created by Warden Morris provided a space for program graduates to exercise agentic behaviors, focus on tasks, exercise explorative behaviors, and relate in a team setting in ways that demonstrated their understanding of how their jobs intersect with the jobs of others in the operation of the HCP; all of which are antecedents to thriving at work within the Spreitzer (2005) model. Effectively, the workplace Warden Morris provided encouraged collective thriving. Thus, my work contributes to advancing the understanding of how collective thriving, specifically within the prison context, can be realized through the mechanisms that stimulate thriving at work. Additionally, by highlighting meso level impacts of collective thriving upon the macro level prison culture, as manifested by the positive impacts of coaching program participants' transformations upon the McKean culture, this study adds to the body of work on collective thriving.

Further study of collective thriving within the carceral context is warranted. For example, our study did not explore the extent to which Warden Morris' and Pioneers' investments in their coachees may have detracted from their own thriving as they were contributing to the collective thriving of Next Gen participants and McKean residents as a whole. In a future study, longitudinal changes in thriving among individual coaching program administrators and

facilitators (micro level) could be compared to changes in thriving among program cohort members (meso level) and/or changes at the prison collective level (macro level) when a cognitive coaching program is introduced to and operationalized at a facility.

Implications for Practice

The model that emerged from this study describes the process by which residents at McKean experienced psychological transformation that contributed to post release well-being. This model and its findings have important implications for practice and hold the potential for reduced recidivism and increased workforce participation, thereby addressing the labor shortage problem. The model has implications for those who seek to administer correctional programs and those who are incarcerated but can also inform practice in other settings.

Implications for Correctional Organizations and Governments

Findings support the notion that coaching programs within the prison context have the potential to materially improve the likelihood of post-release success for returning citizens**.** These findings have important implications for correctional institutions and governments, which can choose to implement such programs **to** reduce recidivism**.** Two important implications for practice include 1) the need for continual innovation among correctional institution leadership and governmental leadership who are responsible for carceral-based curriculum, inclusive of consideration of cognitive coaching program introduction broadly, and 2) reduction in the economic burden placed upon larger society associated with the costs of incarceration**.**

The societal and financial costs of incarceration and recidivism in the United States are high and present burden on taxpayers. The findings support the notion that this burden may be reduced via innovation regarding correctional technique, as was done with the introduction of the coaching program and McKean. Deterrents of recidivism increase the likelihood that returning

citizens contribute constructively to society and reduce the societal burden associated with incarceration. Findings from this study support the notion that willingness among correctional institution leadership to consider novel educational approaches, such as introduction of cognitive coaching programs, has the potential to result in less money being spent on maintaining prison infrastructure (i.e., personnel, programs, facilities) and more citizens being gainfully employed. This would generate value for themselves and their fellow citizens, thereby addressing the secular labor shortage and reducing the dependency burden carried by taxpayers. Additionally, effective carceral cognitive coaching programs that increase returning citizen job attainment and maintenance rates, by increasing the reliable workforce supply, has the potential to enhance the ability of existing businesses to be successful. This is because they can spend less time on employee recruitment and more time on activities, such as innovation, that allow returning citizens (and other employees) to enjoy future employment success associated with enhanced job stability and career advancement opportunities.

Rather than focusing on specific vocational skill development, as do many prison based education programs (Stephan, 1997), the coaching program at McKean instilled within participants a belief that they could identify pathways and exercise agency in ways that allowed them to pursue a desirable future. Warden Morris helped the men believe that they could engage in Type 1 goals (Snyder, 2002). Within the prison context, such goals stood in contrast to Type 2 goals (Snyder, 2002), which were pursued because of their potential to diminish the likelihood of an undesirable outcome. In addition to pathway providing, Warden Morris displayed a powerful belief in the potential of participants. The coaching program helped participants establish a framework of goals (Dekhatyar et al., 2012) and equipped them to pursue those goals to aid in

breaking free of their unsatisfactory life circumstances, circumstances which Lazarus (1999) held as necessary for incubation of hope.

The efficacy of the McKean approach is consistent with findings from studies of facilitative cognitive coaching (praise and seeking opportunities for learning) that were implemented in secular environments such as work teams within a business (Sue-Chan et al., 2012; Weer et al., 2016). As a result of coaching, program participants' mindset shifts toward pursuing opportunities for learning, they began behaving in ways that improved their carceral experiences and those of others within McKean. The willingness of McKean's educational programming leadership, specifically Warden Morris, to introduce an exclusively cognitive coaching-focused program appears to have been contributory to a highly anomalistic outcome, namely the extraordinarily low recidivism rate among returning citizens who participated.

The comparison of the Pioneers and Next Gen subgroups served to strengthen support not only for the ability to of the coaching program to incubate hope in the carceral context, but also for the ability of those who are growing in hope and transforming to effectively replicate facilitation of hope incubating coaching program with future generations of program participants in ways that contribute to post-release thriving. As anticipated, the Pioneers, who inherently had sustained levels of exposure to the coaching program as they successfully curated and implemented the HCP, expressed higher levels of incubating hope, hoping, and transformation, suggesting that greater longevity in practicing program learnings advanced the degree of transformation experienced.

The breadth of occupations and role types participants engaged in upon release, several with a prevailing tendency toward helping others succeed in life, suggested that participants experienced post-release thriving with respect to their occupations. The results of participants'

post-release job-seeking experiences, which were not without difficulty, presented a striking contrast to earlier findings. The strong majority (70%) of participants were Black, and all were currently employed. Compared to Western and Sirois (2019), which showed that Blacks are significantly disadvantaged relative to other returning citizens in their attempts to attain employment, the findings from this study suggest that the McKean coaching program contributed to significantly reducing such disadvantage and such programming should be considered for broad application within the United States prison system.

Regarding legislation, when laws are implemented that maximize the opportunity for citizens within society to pursue goals, the likelihood of the citizenry manifesting destructive behaviors associated with frustration is reduced (Snyder & Feldman, 2000). This notion has applicability to the politically polarized environment currently prevalent in the United States. For example, the efficacy of coaching-focused correctional programming at McKean has implications for broader society as embodied in the reintegration journeys of the returning citizens who participated in the program. Many participants cited their experiences with the coaching program as enabling them to successfully navigate the realities of an arduous employment seeking process, inherently present when one is in possession of a criminal record. Participants not only obtained employment, but also maintained and advanced their positions, inclusive of successfully starting entrepreneurial businesses. The cost of the coaching program at McKean was minimal (i.e., books and Warden Morris's time). And yet, the lack of recidivism among participants serves as evidence that approaches exist that can blunt the high cost of incarceration, supporting the concept of considering government legislation to ensure cognitive coaching programs are available at federally or state operated correctional institutions.

If 70% of the 700,000 (Goodstein, 2019) people released from U.S. prisons each year will recidivate, then 490,000 will return to prison. Imagine if that number can be reduced to something approaching the rate manifested by returning citizens who participated in the McKean coaching program (2%). Rather than 490,000 returning citizens per year, only 14,000 would return to prison, allowing a potential enhancement of the available workforce by 476,000 persons and blunting the United States' labor shortage. Current estimates of the cost of incarceration in the United States are $41,000 per incarcerated person per year (Eisen, 2023), hence the reduction from 490,000 to 14,000 becoming returning inmates equates to $19.5B per year in savings, assuming constant scale economies. This simple coaching program has the power to dramatically reduce the economic burden of incarceration upon taxpayers.

The hopeful transformations experienced at McKean by participants serves to puncture and disrupt the historical norm of expected recidivism rates in United States (Alpler et al., 2018). Perhaps this historical range, supported by the literature, should be considered a normalization of deviation, with the deviation being the gap between what is currently the prevailing steady-state recidivism rate and what is possible with application of better correctional approaches.

Implications for Incarcerated Persons

Some of the most important implications for this work are those associated with its potential impact upon currently incarcerated persons. A desired outcome of this research is to contribute to societal reentry success. Hence, more important than workforce economics is the potential for the 476,000 people per year who do not recidivate after participating in a coaching program to employ their abilities in ways that enable them to experience and enjoy wellness in a free society where they can envision pathways, exercise agency, and pursue hopeful goals that contribute to the betterment of society. Two primary implications for incarcerated persons

flowing from this work are: 1) Hope and transformation can be realized within the carceral setting, allowing inmates to live meaningful lives while in prison, and 2) Hope and transformation realized within the carceral environment extends to the post-release environment**.**

Participating as a coaching program student and graduate (and for some, a developer and facilitator of the HCP), contributed to redeveloped identity, highlighting the emotional significance of membership (Tajfel, 1978). The HCP served as a work-related mechanism of identity redevelopment for participants as they became certified coaches who were facilitating an institution-wide educational offering available to all McKean residents. This work-related identity served to strengthen self-efficacy expression and develop a future orientation among participants, whereby participants felt the confidence to be their transformed selves, while operating within the inherent limitations of the prison context. As such, the findings of this research build upon findings regarding the positive work-related identity transformation that occurred among inmates who worked in call center jobs while incarcerated (Rogers et al., 2017) and has exposed the potential for carceral-based cognitive coaching programs to meaningfully contribute to creating hope, sustained employment, and improved lives for returning citizens and their families while in the carceral setting.

Further, participants, as returning citizens, demonstrated the ability to engage in agentic post-release behavior to establish work-related identities within broader society as business starters, corporate team members, educators, and coaches. Participants accounts of their reintegration journeys suggest that hope and self-efficacy developed within the carceral environment can extend beyond release, consistent with suggestions from research regarding the predictive power of agency relative to recidivism likelihood (Dekhtyar et al., 2012).

The impact of participants' transformations manifested in their post release social relationships in the form of improved communication approaches, such as effective listening and thinking before reacting. Their reintegration journeys included healthy approaches to relating with others, consistent with the positive relationship between communication skills, such as active listening, and self-efficacy observed by Wilson (2016). Also, consistent with findings from earlier research (Kenmore & In, 2020), supportive and healthy family relationships upon reentry played a meaningful role for many participants, aiding their reentry journeys. As returning citizens, participants related with their families in ways consistent with their transformed non-offender identities, inclusive of efforts prior to release to strengthen these relationships, thereby contributing to post release thriving. Additionally, upon reentering society, returning citizens manifested pathway taking and agentic behaviors that led to obtaining and maintaining employment, thereby reducing financial stress, and contributing to wellness. Importantly, this had a contagion effect on their family members, contributing more broadly to a positive societal dynamic.

Participants' post-release journeys paint a picture of returning to society with a momentum for living that allowed them to successfully face obstacles such as entering a community as an ex-convict and facing temptations of reverting to thinking or behaviors (Enosh et al., 2013; Morenoff & Harding, 2014) that contributed to their prior low hope existences. Findings support the blunting effect of participants' transformations upon the stigma associated with what Enosh et al. (2013) described as denigrating mirrors present in the post-release environment, whereby returning citizens perceive an undesirable reflection of themselves as they look in the mirror presented to them in the form of how others react to them in both public and private settings. Participants re-entered society with a surprising momentum, unanticipated from

existing literature, which allowed them to not be distracted or fixated upon such mirrors, and by so doing, shedding a psychological weight that would have impeded their progress toward post-release goal achievement and wellness.

Limitations and Implications for Future Study

The methodology chosen for this study produced deep insights and robust descriptions of participants' experiences and transformations associated with the McKean coaching program. Yet the interview-based approach, sample size, and nature of the sample, although appropriate for the nascent state of knowledge regarding carceral-based coaching programs, limits generalizability. Accordingly, this study has limitations including:

- A narrowly defined population, consisting of male returning citizens who were incarcerated at a common all male United States Federal prison, who participated in a specific cognitive coaching program, and had not recidivated;
- Exclusion of females, inmates at the same facility who did not choose to enter the coaching program, and inmates at other facilities who may have participated in a cognitive coaching program;
- The presence of selection bias associated with Warden Morris' recruitment of the coaching program's initial cohort members.

The risks associated with the limitations are such that transferability (Billups, 2021) of study learnings beyond men in a carceral environment are speculative. Applicability of study learnings to females and other groups, both in the carceral and non-carceral contexts, should be explored in future scholarship. That said, there was no evidence to suggest that the learnings regarding hope incubation, transformation, and thriving lack generalizability to non-carceral settings, whether those settings include only males, only females, or a mixture. Businesses, educational

institutions, and non-profit organizations are mission focused entities, ideally comprised of people who are working to fulfill those missions while experiencing personal thriving. Learnings from this study should be considered by leaders of these organizations as a means of elevating the quality of life for their team members and the constituencies they serve. If some within these organizations are simply surviving and are low on hope, leading to their making a meager contribution to the organization's effectiveness relative to their potential, they are likely also experiencing little in the form of thriving at work. Implementing an intentional cognitive coaching program and providing space (e.g., digital distraction free) for hope incubation has the potential to result in transformations in the form of redeveloped identities that have the self-efficacy necessary to thrive. Such thriving, when experienced by organizations' members (micro level), portends to improve organizations' team dynamics (meso level) and overall effectiveness (macro level).

The demonstrated potential of a cognitive coaching program and the persons leading and facilitating that program to pierce low hope ecosystems, disrupting perpetual surviving mentalities, should be considered by corporations, small businesses, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations. Perhaps many members of these organizations and/or the people they serve need assistance with pathway recognition (providing pathway visibility) and encouragement to exercise agency (agency conveyance), both of which coaches outside the person's immediate ecosystem may provide.

Participants at McKean learned how to think carefully before acting (thought control) and engaged constructively with others by asking powerful questions and listening well. It would be interesting to investigate whether the digital divide (van Dijk, 2006) actually served as an advantage for participants with regard to applying and mastering these learnings in that during

their transformation journeys they were not burdened and obsessed by the distractions and self-esteem depletions associated with having access to social media around the clock, thereby allowing them to focus on redeveloping themselves while encouraging them to engage in goal setting oriented toward their futures; futures that included both a continued period of incarceration and a continuing period of societal reentry as returning citizens. Additionally, the self-reflection encouraged by the program and the lack of distraction associated with the devices of the digital age perhaps contributed to many participants developing and/or deepening their relationships with God, thereby acknowledging their spirituality in ways that appear to have contributed to their transformations and subsequent thriving experiences.

An additional limitation that is true of most interview-based studies is the potential that the accuracy of participants' recollections of events may have been clouded by the passage of time. This risk was minimized by using triangulation techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), including comparison of lived experience oral history (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) accounts among participants, review of the coaching curriculum, discussions with the coaching program founder, and comparisons with the researchers' notes (Lofland et al., 2006) captured during interviews. Also, extensive member checking techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) were used with a subset of participants to ensure trustworthiness of findings.

Despite the limitations, the opportunity to gain learnings from a representative sample (16 of 45 = 36%) of the population of returning citizens who participated in the McKean program has the potential to contribute in valuable ways toward impactful advances in effective corrections techniques. This value is commensurate with the notion of qualitative research done well. As noted by Creswell and Creswell (2018): "In fact, the value of qualitative research lies in

the particular description and themes developed in the context of a specific site. Particularity rather than generalizability is the hallmark of good qualitative research" (p. 202).

Additional areas for future study deriving from this research are myriad. One methodological approach for consideration is the use of the highly validated hope scale (Snyder, et al., 1991), which poses 12 questions using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Definitely False (1) to Definitely True (5). The hope scale instrument could be administered to a cohort of randomly selected inmates before and after they participate in a cognitive coaching program. Their overall levels of change in hope score could then be assessed. Additionally, consistent with the scales' design, responses to particular items could be summed to yield subscale scores that measure participants' sense of agency, and responses to other could be summed to produce subscale scores that measure participants' sense of pathways both before and after participating in the program. Such an approach would remove selection bias and provide a quantitative measurement of hope levels before and after program participation.

The slight difference of thriving expression between Pioneer and Next Gen subgroups needs to be explored more fully with the aim of providing insight into the transferability of cognitive coaching program learnings as they pass through successive generations of cohorts via the mechanism of program graduates becoming program teachers, facilitators, and coaches, as was done with the HCP. Such multiplication of coaches, with little transformation efficacy loss may be possible based upon our study, and as evidenced by the similar thriving expressions among the two cohorts. Rather than cohorts of inmates in a particular facility being trained exclusively by professional administrators or teachers, representing an additive permeation of a program within a facility (in that each new cohort trained adds to the total who have been trained), a multiplicative effect could be realized whereby each new cohort's graduates facilitate

coaching classes with new cohorts. Such multiplicative effect, when compared to the additive model of single instructor, greatly reduces the time required for all residents of a facility who have interest to participate in a coaching program, as well as reduces costs. Further study is needed to understand any dilution in program efficacy as generational distance from the initial instructor-led cohort grows.

Additionally, as hope-cultivating coaching programs are implemented within the prison context, they may produce positive benefits for correctional officers who de facto serve as coaches to inmates. Correctional officers' jobs are incredibly stressful, which has an enormous impact upon their health and outside of work lives, leaving them on the low end of healthiness among public safety occupations (Namazi et al., 2021). Advancing understanding the impact upon correctional officers co-participating in cognitive coaching programs is an area worthy of future explorations.

Finally, gender interactions were not explored as part of this research. The prominent level of respect participants manifested toward Warden Morris suggests that the particularized hope conveying influence of a female administrator upon male inmates is an appropriate area for future study. Also, the racial diversity among participants and their willingness to work together to improve suggest that the form and function of the coaching program may have utility in bridging racial tensions. Given the potential for broader societal implications, these are promising areas for future study.

Conclusion

The prevailing United States recidivism rates among returning citizens suggest that a normalization of deviation has occurred, in that nominally 70% of incarcerated persons deemed ready to reenter society and who are released return to prison. Such recidivism rates are

unacceptable and detrimental to all citizens. The resultant cost of this undetected lack of readiness to reenter manifests for returning citizens who recidivate as the loss of opportunity to freely deploy their gifts in constructive and fulfilling ways. The costs to society include not having the opportunity to journey alongside returning citizens to enjoy human interaction, the emotional and financial burdens associated with crime, the loss of capable workforce, and the tax burden associated with reincarceration.

As a deterrent to such recidivism, the aim of this research was to gain an understanding of how cognitive coaching approaches applied within the United States prison system improve the likelihood of returning citizens experiencing post release well-being. Additionally, the research addressed the effectiveness of cognitive coaching programs in conveying respect and nurturing a sense of dignity within the prison context that extended to the post-release environment, thereby enhancing understanding of the applicability of theories of hope, self-efficacy and thriving. The returning citizens who participated in the McKean coaching program are now living successfully within society. Along with Warden Morris, they have shattered the norm, giving hope to all who are and have been incarcerated, their loved ones, and society at large, thereby demonstrating that *hope* is not a train that has left the station.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: May 04, 2023

Protocol Investigator Name: Mark Cox

Protocol #: 23-04-2146

Project Title: Project Hope: The Impact of Coaching and Transformation Among Returned Citizens

School: Graziadio School of Business and Management

Dear Mark Cox:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research

APPENDIX B: RECIDIVISM REDUCTION PROGRAMS BY TYPE AND PREVALENCE

Figure A1. Recidivism Reduction Programs by Type and Prevalence

Approved evidence-based recidivism reduction programs and productive activities, by facility availability and prisoner needs met, 2021

Program/activity	BOP facilities that offered program/activity	Hours of program credit	Program met needs of persons in prison concerning— Anger/ hostility	Antisocial peers	Cognitions	Dyslexia	Education	Family/ parenting	Finance/ poverty	Medical	Mental health	Recreation/ leisure/fitness	Substance abuse	Trauma	Work
Evidence-based recidivism reduction program															
Anger Management	122	18	■		■										
Assert Yourself for Female Offenders	28	8			■			■							
Basic Cognitive Skills	122	24			■										
BRAVE	5	500		■	■										
Bureau Literacy Program	122	240					■								
Challenge Program	12	500	■	■	■						■		■		
Cognitive Processing Therapy	122	10			■						■			■	
Criminal Thinking	122	27		■	■										
Dialectical Behavior Therapy	122	50			■						■			■	
Emotional Self-Regulation	122	24			■						■				
Federal Prison Industries	52	500													■
Female Integrated Treatment*	2	500		■	■						■		■	■	■
Foundation	28	15			■		■				■				■
Illness Management and Recovery	122	60									■				
Life Connections Program	6	500						■							
Mental Health Step Down Program	4	500		■	■						■				
Money Smart for Adults	122	32							■						
Money Smart for Older Adults	122	28							■						
National Parenting from Prison Program	122	40						■							
Non-residential Drug Abuse Program	122	24			■								■		
Occupational Education Program	122														
Vocational Training Programs	/	125													■
Apprenticeship Programs	/	500													■
Certification Programs	/	50													■

Continued on next page

Approved evidence-based recidivism reduction programs and productive activities, by facility availability and prisoner needs met, 2021

Program/activity	BOP facilities that offered program/activity	Hours of program credit	Program met needs of persons in prison concerning— Anger/ hostility	Antisocial peers	Cognitions	Dyslexia	Education	Family/ parenting	Finance/ poverty	Medical	Mental health	Recreation/ leisure/fitness	Substance abuse	Trauma	Work
Post-secondary Education	15	500													■
Residential Drug Abuse Program	71	500		■	■						■		■		
Resolve Program	31	20-90			■						■			■	
Seeking Safety and Seeking Strength	122	15		■	■						■		■	■	
Sex Offender Treatment Program Non-residential	9	500			■										
Sex Offender Treatment Program Residential	2	500		■	■										
Skills Program	2	500		■	■						■				
Social Skills Training	122	60		■	■						■				
STAGES Program	2	500		■	■						■			■	
Threshold Program	122	72						■							
Women's Basic Financial Literacy*	27	18							■						
Women's Career Exploration Series*	27	32													■
Productive activities															
A Healthier Me*	27	10										■			
A Matter of Balance	122	16										■			
AARP Foundation Finances 50+	122	5							■						
Access*	27	10			■						■			■	
Alcoholics Anonymous Support Group	122	50											■		
Aleph Institute	122	50		■	■		■								
Arthritis Foundation Walk with Ease	122	6								■		■			
Beyond Violence: Prevention Program for Criminal-Justice Involved Women*	27	40	■		■										
Brain Health as You Age	122	5								■		■			
Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Suicidal Individuals	122	20									■				

Continued on next page

Approved evidence-based recidivism reduction programs and productive activities, by facility availability and prisoner needs met, 2021

Program/activity	BOP facilities that offered program/activity	Hours of program credit	Program met needs of persons in prison concerning—												
			Anger/ hostility	Antisocial peers	Cognitions	Dyslexia	Education	Family/ parenting	Finance/ poverty	Medical	Mental health	Recreation/ leisure/fitness	Substance abuse	Trauma	Work
CBT for Eating Disorders	122	20									■				
CBT for Insomnia	122	10									■				
CBT for Prison Gambling	122	20		■	■										
Change Plan*	27	15			■		■				■				■
Circle of Strength*	27	20			■						■			■	
Disabilities Education Program	122	10		■	■					■					
Drug Education	122	15											■		
Embracing Interfaith Cooperation	122	10			■										
English as a Second Language	122	500					■								■
Federal Prison Industries Lean Basic Training	51	16													■
Franklin Covey 7 Habits on the Inside	122	50						■							
Getting to Know Your Healthy Aging Body	122	12								■		■			
Health and Wellness Throughout the Lifespan	122	3								■		■			
Healthy Steps for Older Adults	122	3								■		■			
Hooked on Phonics	122	500				■									
Houses of Healing	122	24			■										
K2 Awareness Program	122	5											■		
Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions	122	24								■		■			
Managing your Diabetes	122	12								■					
Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy	122	16									■				
Narcotics Anonymous	122	50											■		
National Diabetes Prevention Program	122	16								■		■			
PEER	122	10		■											
Pu'a Foundation Reentry Program	1	20						■						■	
Resilience Support	122	8		■	■										

Continued on next page

Approved evidence-based recidivism reduction programs and productive activities, by facility availability and prisoner needs met, 2021

Program/activity	BOP facilities that offered program/activity	Hours of program credit	Program met needs of persons in prison concerning—												
			Anger/ hostility	Antisocial peers	Cognitions	Dyslexia	Education	Family/ parenting	Finance/ poverty	Medical	Mental health	Recreation/ leisure/fitness	Substance abuse	Trauma	Work
Service Fit	122	16										■			
Sexual Self-Regulation	122	100			■										
Soldier On	122	15		■										■	
Square One: Essentials for Women*	27	12							■		■	■			
Start Now	122	32	■		■										
Supported Employment	122	20					■				■				■
Talking with Your Doctor: Guide for Older Adults	122	5								■		■			
Trauma Education	122	8									■			■	
Ultra Key 6: The Ultimate Keyboarding Tutor	122	20					■								■
Understanding Your Feelings: Shame and Low Self Esteem*	27	7			■						■			■	
Victim Impact: Listen and Learn	122	26			■										
Wellness Recovery Action Plan	122	20									■				
Women in the 21st Century Workplace*	27	10					■								■
Women's Aging: Aging Well*	27	10								■		■			
Women's Relationships*	27	5		■	■			■							
Women's Relationships II*	27	74		■	■			■						■	
Women's Reflections Group	27	36		■	■										

Note: This table responds to P.L. 115–391 Section 610, **Item 23**, which requested the capacity of each approved evidence-based recidivism reduction program (EBRR) and productive activity (PA) available to persons held in Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities. Includes EBRRs and PAs that the BOP accepted to yield First Step Act good time credits. Includes 122 facilities operated by the BOP during 2021. Excludes privately operated federal correctional facilities. Program availability does not imply program participation. Details on each program can be found in the First Step Act Approved Programs Guide (https://www.bop.gov/inmates/fsa/docs/fsa_program_guide_2201.pdf).

*Offered in facilities that housed only females. In 2021, the BOP operated 27 such facilities.

/Not reported.

Source: Bureau of Prisons, First Step Act Approved Programs Guide, January 2022.

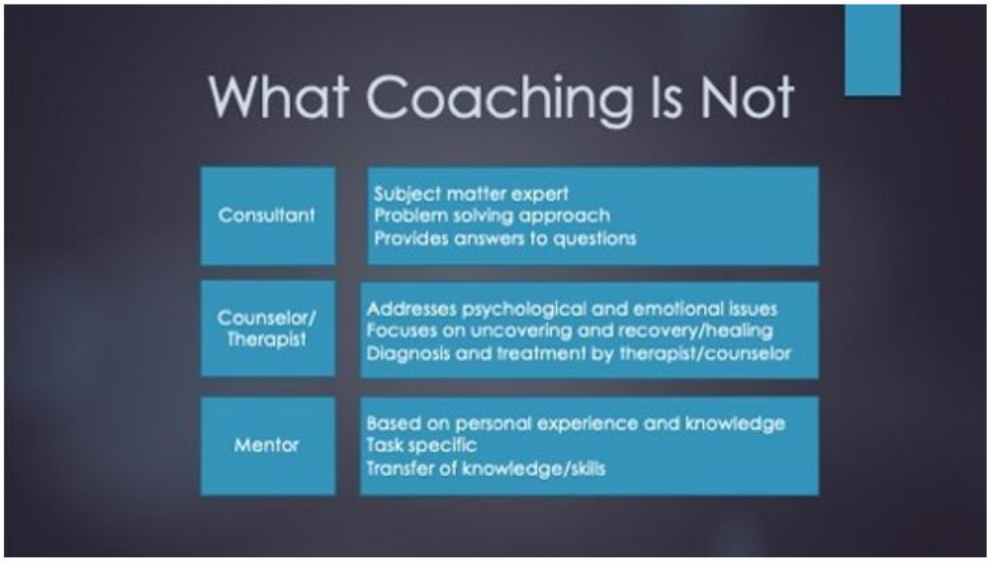
APPENDIX C: REPRESENTATIVE COACHING PROGRAM CONTENT OVERVIEW

Module 1 – Welcome and Introduction

This module begins with an introductory icebreaker and establishing a definition of coaching. The working definition of coaching used in the course flows from the International Coaching Federation definition, which is "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. Coaching honors the client as the expert in his/her life and believes that every client is naturally creative, resourceful, and whole (International Coaching Federation New Mexico Chapter, n.d.)." This definition is consistent with the Van Zyl (2021) definition provided in the literature view, in that it elucidates a virtuous partnership between the coach and the client, whereby the coach calls upon the client to acknowledge and deploy their gifts within the context of daily living. Figures A2 and A3 are slides used within the training to add detail to the working definition of coaching used within the program.

Figure A2. Coaching Description from SPC Draft Instructor Manual

Figure A3. Description of What Coaching Is Not from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



Module 2 – The Research

This module covers the research that forms the foundation for the coaching training program, indicating that the program was developed after studying several evidence-based programs that had shown success toward behavioral modification in the community corrections area. Criminogenic needs, as shown in Figure A4, define factors that are directly linked to higher rates of inmates engaging in offenses after release. The training approach comes from the perspective of first addressing the four most influential risk factors, shown in the left grouping, with the belief that doing so will likely have the greatest impact toward reducing recidivism.

Figure A4. Criminogenic Needs Diagram from SPC Draft Instructor Manual

Effecting change toward pro-social behavior requires individuals to go through stages of change inclusive of starting from the point of no acknowledgment of an existing behavioral problem, moving to acknowledgement, preparation to change, taking actions to change, and behaving in way that maintains that change. A simple exercise of testing reading speeds for a series of words versus speeds in naming the font color of a series of letters is utilized to show how difficult it is to break long engrained behavioral habits.

Module 3 – Building Professional Alliance

The aim of this module is to help individuals learn how to build rapport with others in the carceral environment. One of the exercises in this module asks participants to describe the characteristics of someone in their lives who was instrumental in helping them achieve a goal or complete a difficult task – specifically the things that person did to motivate and encourage. Additionally, professional alliance traits associated with building human rapport are overviewed as shown in Figure A5, and participants complete a self-assessment instrument measuring their perception of how well they express each of the fourteen traits. After completing the assessment, participants are asked to reflect upon what may have surprised them and which traits they view as the most and least important.

Figure A5. Professional Alliance Traits from SPC Draft Instructor Manual

This module also provides training in *active listening*, with a focus on developing the discipline of listening inclusive of developing an understanding of the power of non-verbal communication. The module teaches listening technique associated with how to focus and immerse one's whole self into listening to absorb what another is saying.

An introductory exercise around active listening involves participants taking turns telling each other about a high point in their lives while their partner in the exercise listens. The listening partner seeks to identify emotions and subtexts that are not being verbalized and shares with the telling partner what was heard.

The primary exercise is then undertaken, with the subject being a behavior change that participants are contemplating. In step 1 of the exercise, after actively listening, the listening partner provides verbal feedback per the guidance shown in Figure A6. In step 2 of the exercise, the partners switch roles, and the telling partner describes a change he/she is contemplating, but this time, as a step toward learning how to ask *powerful questions*, the listening partner asks the questions shown in Figure A7. Instruction on asking powerful questions focuses on technique around asking open ended questions to promote interaction and surface underlying feelings and emotions without asking in a way that disguises a suggestion as a question.

Figure A6. Active Listening Exercise – Describing What Was Heard from SPC Draft Instructor Manual

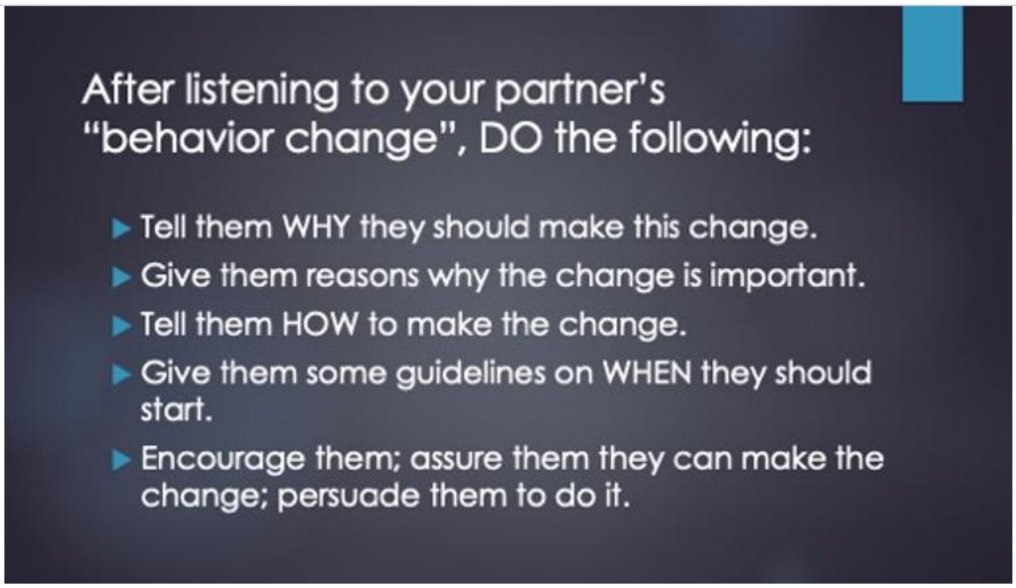
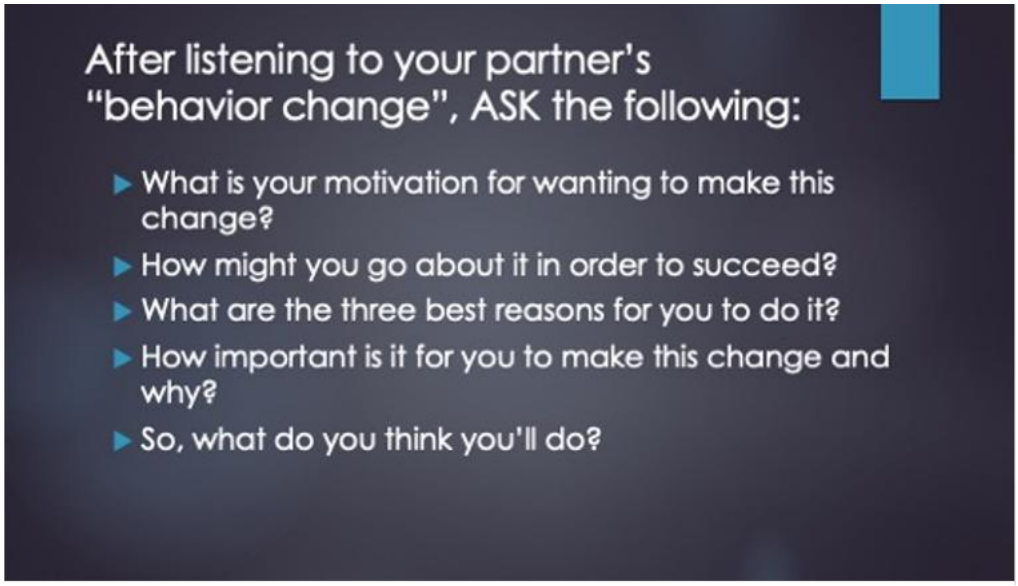


Figure A7. Active Listening Exercise – Asking Powerful Questions from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



This module also teaches that our performance as humans is below optimal when we do not feel safe, do not feel we belong, and do not feel we matter. Coaches aim to provide a safe place of belonging and value within which the client can find their owns solutions.

Module 4 – The Coaching Conversation

The core of the coaching conversation is captured within this module, framing the conversation as simply having a beginning, middle, and end as captured in Figure A8. These three macro divisions of the conversation are then further subdivided into five steps, as shown in Figure A9.

Figure A8. Coaching Conversation Structure from A Coach Approach Instructor Manual

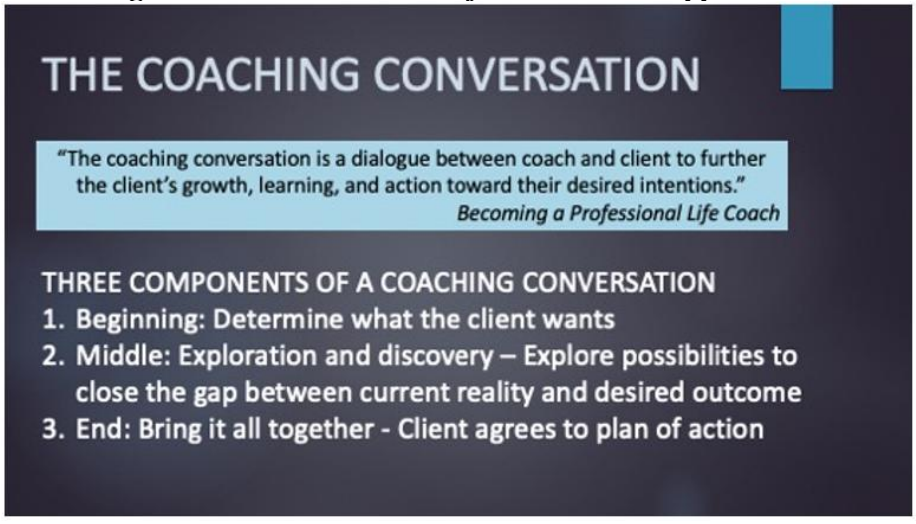


Figure A9. Coaching Conversation Five Step Process from SPC Draft Instructor Manual

Beginning: Technique is taught regarding how to begin the conversation, checking for the client's willingness to enter the coaching relationship (e.g., was the prework completed?), understanding what the client wants to take away from the coaching engagement, and restating to the client what the coach has heard regarding the client's intent in entering the relationship.

Middle: This is the longest part of a coaching conversation. Technique is taught regarding gap assessment (where the client is now versus where they would like to be). Also, participants are taught how to guide clients through a visioning process that includes defining future success and identifying yearnings. Instruction is provided regarding how to move clients toward identifying options that may require breaking current habits to move toward their vision for themselves.

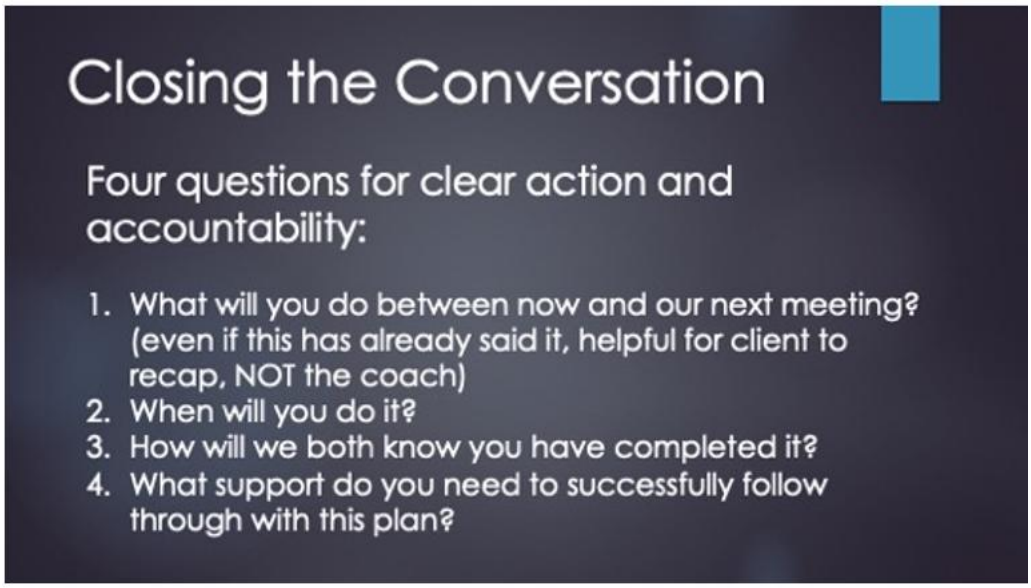
Participants are also taught to aid clients in identifying and articulating the strengths they possess and how those might be applied to moving toward their vision. An assessment tool, based upon the Immunity to Change Model (Kegan & Lahey, 2009) is used to identify behaviors and assumptions that may go against the change the client is trying to make. Participants in the class complete this assessment to gauge their own willingness to change.

Participants are then taught how to develop an action plan with clients and form a contract between the coach and client that creates client accountability for taking the actions the client identified to move toward the behavioral change they say they want to make. To close this section,

the instructor demonstrates the techniques by coaching a class participant to move from thinking about making a change to creating a plan to make the change. This is an effort to move a participant to the point of acting as if they could accomplish their self-articulated goal(s).

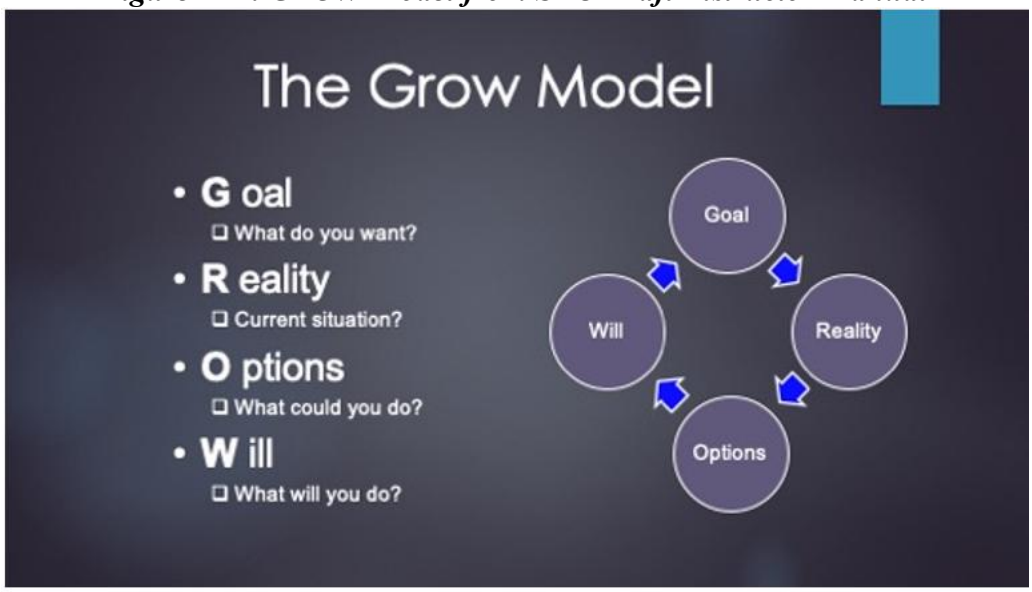
End: For this portion of the coaching conversation, technique is taught around how to design action plans and set goals. Also, participants are instructed in ways to monitor clients' progress toward behavioral change. Figure A10 captures the four key questions that clients can be asked in support of an action and accountability path forward.

Figure A10. Closing the Coaching Conversation with an Accountable Action Plan from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



To close the module, participants are exposed to the GROW Model as shown in Figure A11. The coaching conversation techniques that have been taught are then reviewed to show they comport with the model.

Figure A11. GROW Model from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



Module 5 – Operant Conditioning

Operant conditioning is based upon operant conditioning theory, positing the notion that rewards and punishment can be used to modify behavior. While the content of this module acknowledges the power of the theory, it suggests that correctional institutions have overused the negative reinforcement component. The Bob Newhart *Stop It* video is used to introduce the module and show that simply telling someone to stop a self-destructive behavior is insufficient to modify behavior, implying that behavior modification is a longitudinal change process. As a demonstration exercise, participants play a game of searching for a hidden object by instructing the searcher with verbal cues using "hot" when they are close to the object and "cold" when they are far from the object. Additionally, the instructor engages in a detailed question and answer session with participants regarding how to teach a child to shoot a basketball free throw. These two exercises illustrate, in simple terms, the principles associated with operant conditioning.

The coach approach takes the position that a proper balance of reinforcement to correction needs to be undertaken to modify behavior and that the use of meaningful reinforcement reduces the need to use negative consequences. Meaningful reinforcement is described as certain, immediate, and relevant, per the definitions shown below:

Certainty: Behavior that is certain to be reinforced or punished on a predictable basis is more susceptible to change.
Immediacy: The closer in time the reinforcement or punishment is applied to the actual behavior, the greater the connection between the behavior and its consequences.
Relevance: The more meaningful the reinforcement or punishment is to the resident, the more likely the behavior will change.

Participants are asked to self-assess the type of reinforcement they most often use – positive or negative. They are also asked to consider whether they agree with the notion that the effect of negative reinforcement upon unwanted behavior is to suppress, but when the negative reinforcement is removed, the behavior reemerges. Conversely, they are asked to consider whether they have found that desired behaviors are only present when positive reinforcers are present. This teaching approach suggests that the presence of reinforcers (positive or negative) is insufficient alone to produce ownership of behavioral change.

To create ownership of behavioral change, participants are taught the cognitive techniques for effective use of reinforcement as shown in Figure A12. As a demonstration, the instructor asks for a participant volunteer to role play, using a script, the use of effective reinforcement. Participants are then divided into groups and given the opportunity to practice effective reinforcement with each other, using the realistic to carceral life scenarios shown in Figure A13.

Figure A12. Effective Use of Reinforcement from SPC Draft Instructor Manual

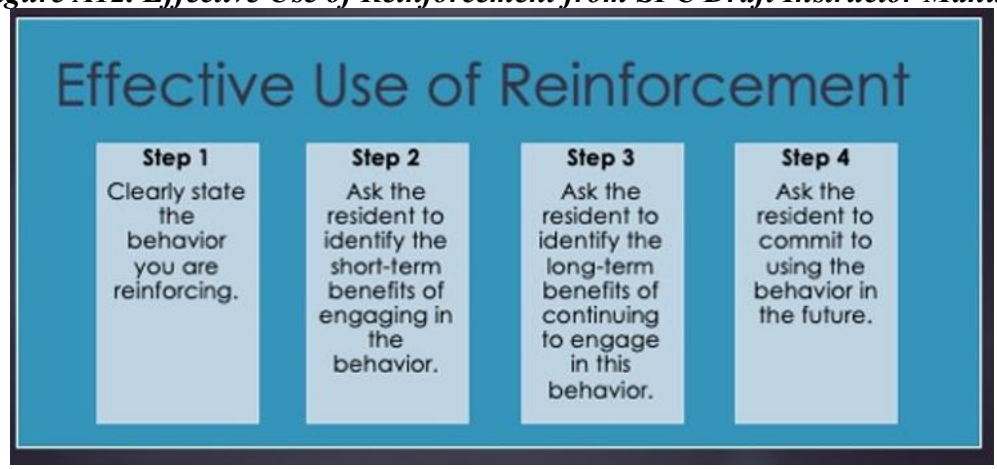
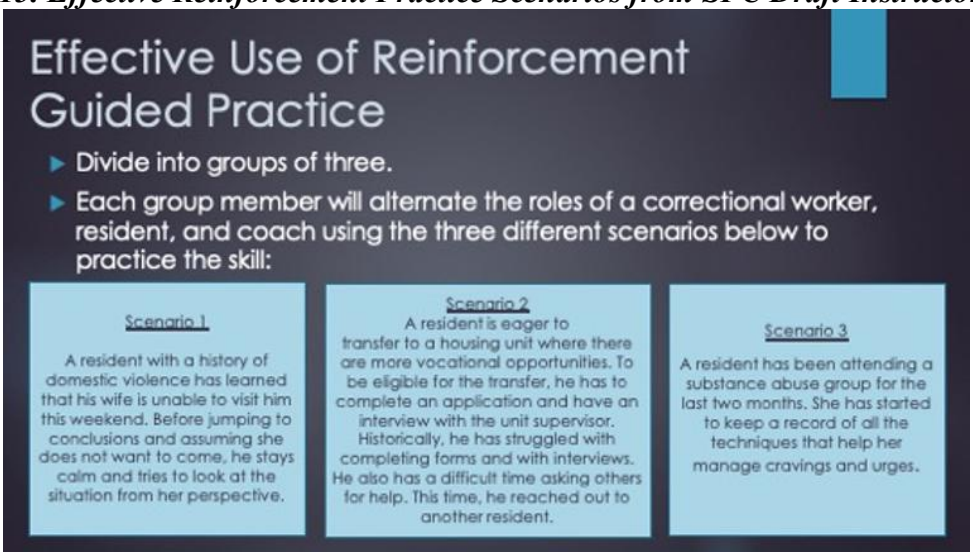
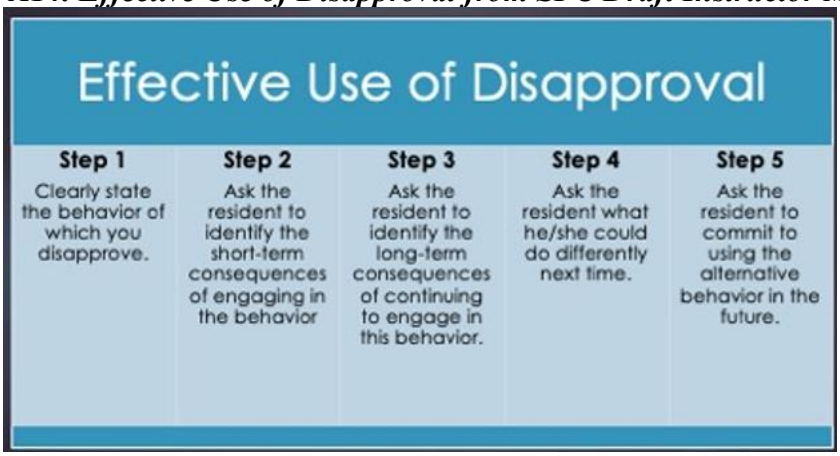


Figure A13. Effective Reinforcement Practice Scenarios from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



Following instruction regarding effective reinforcement, participants are then instructed on effective use of disapproval, per the five-step process shown in Figure A14. As a demonstration, the instructor uses a script, realistic to the carceral environment, and role plays with a volunteer participant to model the five steps.

Figure A14. Effective Use of Disapproval from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



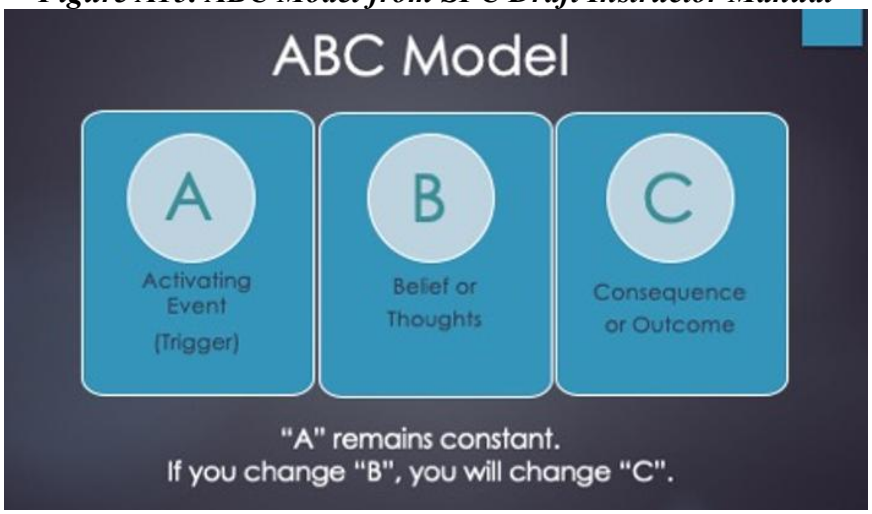
The final component of this module provides corrections personnel instruction on effective use of authority.

Module 6 – Intervention Skills

This module aims to teach participants how to use coaching skills to intervene in clients' problem behavioral patterns to help them improve their thoughts and emotions. Four interventions skills taught are – the ABC model, thinking traps, problem solving, and cost benefit analysis, each aimed to enhance the resiliency of both coaches and their clients.

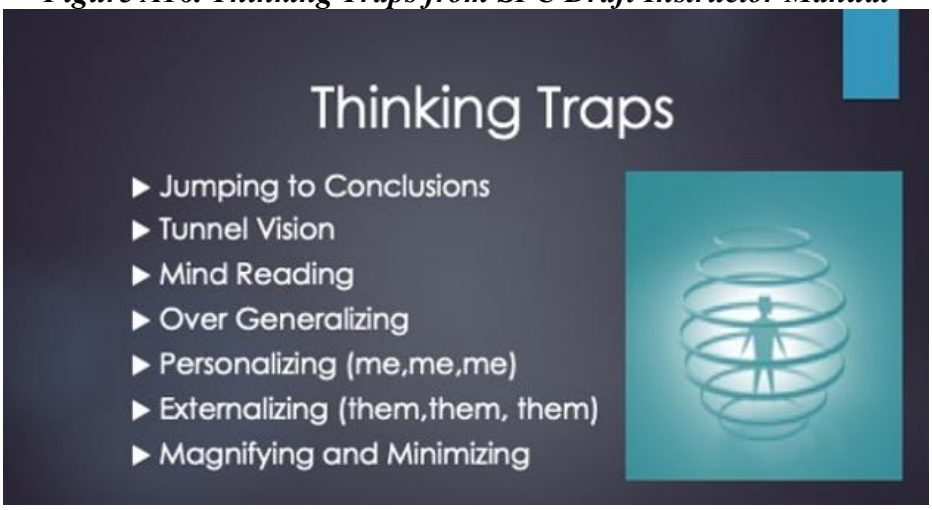
ABC Model: The ABC model is depicted in Figure A15 and is useful in behavioral therapy toward understanding how thoughts determine emotions. Multiple true to carceral life scenarios are discussed to demonstrate how vastly differing consequences can be derived from the same activating event, based upon one's beliefs and thoughts.

Figure A15. ABC Model from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



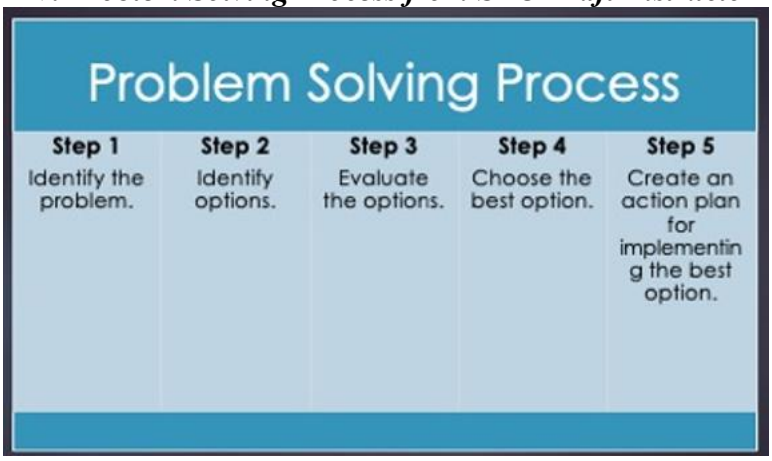
Thinking Traps: The seven thinking traps shown in Figure A16 are reviewed with participants. Through use of a series of riddles, the instructor demonstrates how allowing one's brain to use short-cuts for processing efficiency can result in manifestation of these traps.

Figure A16. Thinking Traps from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



Problem Solving: The instructor asks participants to identify common problems that prison residents face and acknowledges the significance of these problems. The instructor then teaches the 5-step approach to problem solving shown in Figure A17, and participants use a worksheet in their course manual to work real-time through the process of developing an action plan to address one of the problems identified. As an additional learning exercise, participants form pairs and alternate sharing a problem they are facing while their partner uses the problem-solving process to coach them toward action plan development.

Figure A17. Problem Solving Process from SPC Draft Instructor Manual



Cost Benefit Analysis: The instructor presents the cost-benefit assessment grid shown in Figure A18 and demonstrates to participants how to use the grid to help clients assess the benefits and costs of behavioral change relative to the benefits and costs of maintaining the same behavior.

Figure A18. Cost-Benefit Grid from SPC Draft Instructor Manual

Module 7 – Close This module brings the training to a close by providing participants with the opportunity to create a personal action plan regarding how they will act as a coach, using the skills they have learned.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Objective

This interview is a component of my dissertation research at Pepperdine University, entitled *Project Hope: The Impact of Coaching and Transformation Among Returning Citizens*. The research seeks to understand what programs, systems, or processes inside the prison system (e.g., coaching, support, job readiness, educational) promote transformation and re-entry, including employability and well-being, and in particular dignity, hope, and confidence upon release.

Underlying Research Question

How can coaching programs within United States prisons foster hope, transformation, and increased likelihood of employment attainment and maintenance for returning citizens?

Introduction

- *Introduce myself* - Hello, I am Mark Cox, an Executive Doctoral Student at Pepperdine University and recently retired corporate Executive from Eastman Chemical. I am leading this research that seeks to understand how programs, systems, or processes inside the prison system (e.g., coaching, support, job readiness, educational) promote transformation and re-entry, including employability and well-being, and in particular dignity, hope, and confidence upon release.

- *Respect for persons* - Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today. I want to start by reiterating that your participation in this study is voluntary.

- *Beneficence* – I want to make sure that throughout this interview you are comfortable. If at any time, you feel uncomfortable, you are at liberty to exit from this interview without any explanation.

- *Overview of the Study* -We will talk about your story and how the programming you participated in at McKean has influenced your life after release. You will be asked a series of questions about your experiences during and after prison and how they shaped who you are today.

- *Justice* - We seek to understand how coaching, education, and job preparedness approaches in prison impacted you. Our desire is that this work will meaningfully contribute to identifying coaching and educational approaches that foster hope and contribute to improving lives for returning citizens and their families.

- *Process* - To facilitate my notetaking, I would like to record our conversations today. All information you share today will be held confidential. We will protect your identity and your privacy, using the process outlined in the informed consent document. Do you have any questions about that protocol? If not, please indicate your informed consent.

- Do you have any other questions before we begin? Feel free to ask me any questions throughout, and you can take a break at any time - just let me know. Sound good? Great, let's get started.

Note: Parentheticals at end of each question connote major themes being explored through the research: (PT) = Psychological Transformation; (PP) = Prison Programming; (R) = Reintegration

Program Experiences

1. While at FCI McKean, what sorts of coaching, support, job readiness or education programs did you experience? (PP)

2. Can you recall how you became involved in these programs? (PT)

3. Let's focus on the coaching program for the moment. Tell me about what happened in the program. [Potential probes] Are there any pieces of the program that really stand out in your mind? Any specific modules or exercises you can recall? How long were you involved in the program? (PP)

4. Were there coaches in the program that you found particularly inspiring? If so, why? (PT)(PP)

    a. What was your relationship like with these coaches?
    b. What characteristics of the coaches were most powerful?

5. Was there a particular moment that you sensed that change was occurring within yourself? [Potential probes] What was that like? Do you recall what might have prompted these changes specifically? (PT)

    a. Is it fair to say that you were transformed by the coaching? How so? Why?
    b. We are interested in how coaching might influence hope, defined as…. Would you say that coaching changed your sense of hope? How so?
    c. We are also interested in how coaching may have influenced your sense of whether you can achieve things in life. Would you say coaching had this influence? In what ways?
    d. We are curious if coaching changed your sense of identity or self-concept. Did coaching change the way you think about yourself or how you define yourself? How so?
    e. Finally, we are interested in how coaching might influence your sense of agency or self-control. Did coaching change this for you? How so?

6. Were there any other programs, systems or processes that worked alongside the coaching program that helped facilitate this change? (PP)

7. Was any of the education you received delivered remotely using IT tools such as remote audio, video, or computer-based systems? (PP)

8. What differences did you see between those who participated in the programming and those that did not? (PT) behaviors that they exhibited, how they had conversations with others, what activities they participated in?

9. Did anyone outside of McKean participate in the program alongside you (e.g., a family member)? [Potential probes] Tell me about the effects of this participation. Are there other means by which those outside of McKean (e.g., your family or the community) supported you? (PP)(R)

10. How do you think you and your colleagues in the coaching program impacted the culture at McKean as a result of having gone through the coaching program? [Potential probes] How did the coaching program impact the way you interacted with others within the prison? Did you find yourself becoming a coach to fellow inmates and/or others? (PT)

Post-release Experiences

11. How were you different during and after the programming, than prior to it? (PT)

12. Tell me about the first few days and weeks after your release. [Potential probes] Who were some of your first contacts? Do you believe the programming in McKean played a role in those early days? How about the coaching program in particular? (R)

13. How has your employment journey unfolded since release? (R)

14. Have you returned to prison since having participated in the program and been released? (PT)(R)

15. Has the program continued to affect the way you live your life today? How? [Potential probe] How is it relevant to what you are currently doing? Are you coaching anyone currently? (PT)(R)

Future Programming

16. What advice do you have for the design and delivery of programs in prisons to increase the possibility of transformation or assist in re-entry? [Potential probe] Are there particular programs that you believe are the most effective? (PP)
17. What question do you think I should have asked, but didn't?

Closing Comment

Thank you very much for taking the time to do this interview. It is my hope that learnings from this study will be used to aid future returning citizens with respect to their enjoying successful lives, including sustained employment. If additional items come to mind later that you would like to share, please don't hesitate to contact me. Also, if acceptable to you, I may reach out in the future to follow up on our discussion.

APPENDIX E: ADULT PARTICIPATION INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Formal Study Title:
Project Hope: The Impact of Coaching and Transformation Among Returning Citizens

Principal Investigator: Mark Cox Contact: mark.k.cox@pepperdine.edu

Key Information:
If you agree to participate in this study, the project will involve:

- An interview lasting approximately 45-60 minutes
- Interviews will be conducted online via Zoom.
- There is minimal risk associated with this study.
- There is no compensation for your participation in this research.

Invitation
You are invited to participate in a research project titled "Project Hope: The Impact of Coaching and Transformation Among Returning Citizens." The informed consent process is meant to help you decide whether to participate in the study. This document will explain the purpose of this research project, the time commitments, the procedures used in the study, and the risks and benefits of participating in this research project. Please make sure you understand the information completely and ask questions if you need more clarification.

What is the reason for doing this research study?
This study seeks to understand how programs, systems, or processes inside the prison system (e.g., coaching, support, job readiness, educational) promote transformation and re-entry, including employability and well-being, and in particular dignity, hope, and confidence upon release. The study aims to address recidivism by understanding and systematically documenting the transformation process that occurred among returning citizens (those who were previously incarcerated) who are currently leading healthy, successful lives characterized by overall wellness. We define wellness as emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual well-being.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study?
You are being invited because you participated in the coaching and development programs implemented by Associate Warden Susan Morris and Dr. Ellen Neily Ritter while you were at McKean Federal Corrections Institute. By exploring participants' experiences with these programs, we seek to better understand how the programs, systems or processes shaped who you are today.

What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?
During the interview, you will be asked to share your story, including your life during and after prison. We are particularly interested in understanding your experience of the coaching program implemented at McKean.

Where will this study take place?
Interviews will be conducted online via Zoom.

What is the time commitment for participating in this study?
You should expect to spend approximately 45 - 60 minutes.

How will my interview data be used?
With your permission, interviews be transcribed into Microsoft Word documents and checked for accuracy. While interviews will not be anonymous, you will not be asked for personally identifiable information and are advised not to disclose personally identifiable information in your responses. The results of the project will be coded in such a way as to remove any identifying markers, and your identity will not be attached in any form to the final transcript and reports. Results will only be reported in aggregate and all responses will be made confidential in that reporting, omitting your name, the name of the company(ies) you work or worked for, and locations that could be used to identify you.

For video-recorded interviews, you will be asked to rename your video window to a code that the researcher will assign. Once data is saved under the code and transcriptions are verified, all recordings and visual images will be deleted. Transcriptions will be saved to a secure, password-protected folder of the Pepperdine drive and will be accessible only by the research team consisting of one principal investigator and two supervisory faculty members. Researchers will keep the data from this study for ten years, after which time it will be destroyed.

What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?
Your well-being is of the utmost importance to us. As in all research, there may be unforeseen risks to you, the participant. We anticipate that the interview process poses minimal risk to you. There is no information being collected that would pose a risk to any personal employee outcomes at work. Your responses to questions in this interview should not pose any risks to your reputation, employability, financial standing, or educational advancement. There is a very small chance that you may experience mild discomfort when recalling conversations about life experiences. Should you become upset during the interview process, you can refuse to answer a question. In addition, the interview can be stopped at any time without you having to state a reason. If the interview causes you to recall conversations or situations that cause discomfort, we will provide referrals to counseling services. There is no information being collected that would pose a risk to any personal employee outcomes at work.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?
There are no direct benefits to participants in this study. However, this study should provide the opportunity to reflect on how the coaching you received at McKean impacted who you are today. You will be contributing to research and practice aimed at improving the impact of coaching upon returning citizens' lives. It is hoped that this research will benefit returning citizens throughout the United States and potentially beyond.

What are the alternatives to being in this research study?
The alternative is to not participate in the study. You may opt out of the study at any time and for any reason.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?
We acknowledge and appreciate the time commitment required to participate in this study. You should expect to spend approximately 45-60 minutes with us during the interview.

Will you be compensated for being in this research study?
There is no compensation for your participation in this research.

What should you do if you have a problem during this research study?
Your welfare is the major concern of every member of the research team. If you have a problem as a direct result of being in this study, you should immediately contact Mark Cox at mark.k.cox@pepperdine.edu.

How will information about you be protected?
Numerous steps will be taken to protect your privacy and the confidentiality of your study data. Interview transcripts will be acquired through transcription software and Zoom's transcription feature. Individual interview session transcripts will be stripped of all identifying information and stored in a way that protects the participant's identity. In order to protect confidentiality within the interview dataset, each interview participant will be assigned a code. Interview data will be cataloged alongside the code assigned to the individual participant, and the interview session from which the data was collected. A Master Document with codes will be kept in a secure, password-protected location separate from the dataset on the researcher's computer. The only persons who will have access to your research records are the study personnel, and as required by law, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Pepperdine University, and any other person agency, or sponsor required by law. The information from this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as a group or summary data and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

What are your rights as a research subject?
You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. For study-related questions, please contact Mark Cox at mark.k.cox@pepperdine.edu. For questions concerning your rights or complaints about the research contact the Institutional Review Board. (IRB): Phone: 1(310)568-2305 Email: gpsirb@pepperdine.edu

What will happen if you decide not to be in this research study or decide to stop participating once you start? You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study ("withdraw') at any time before, during, or after the research begins for any reason. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the investigator, Pepperdine University or with your organization.

Documentation of informed consent

You are voluntarily making a decision whether to be in this research study. Verbally expressing consent and/or signing this form means that (1) you have understood this consent form, (2) you have had the consent form explained to you, (3) you have had your questions answered, and (4) you have decided to be in the research study. A copy of a consent form can be sent to you at your request.

I have understood this informed consent agreement. The risks and benefits have been explained to me. I agree to take part in this study.

Please Print Your Name

_____

Please sign and date

_____

Participant Feedback Survey

To meet Pepperdine University's ongoing accreditation efforts and to meet the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP) standards, a voluntary online feedback form regarding this Informed Consent process is included here.

APPENDIX F: CODE STRUCTURE

Theme Count	Second Order Code Count	First Order Codes Count
6	24	281

Theme	Second Order Codes (3)	First Order Codes (29)
Surviving	Low hope (pre-incarceration)	Deficit of hope in early life environment Drug dealing destiny Language limitations Porch to streets Pre-incarceration peer affirmation of one's low potential Survival actions that are against conscience Unrelatable perpetual childhood trauma Unstable early family setting creating basic needs deficit
	Low hope during incarceration	Agency absence Anger as exclusive expressed emotion Behavioral skill deficit limiting career options Bitter victimization as a life sentence Cessation of regret producing obsessions with the past by looking toward the future Coaching perceived as another way to get out of work Deficit of belief Incapacitated outside of criminal ecosystem Malevolent mentorship of the vulnerable No way to improve Passive approach to the future Reactive side of life Revenge as anger outlet State of mental and physical malaise Surviving in a restricted environment
	Pathways exist	Athletics as a way out of low hope ecosystem Coaching as builder of post-release career opportunity Coaching enabling opportunity awareness Demonstrating commitment through financial sponsorship Getting an education Pathway identification capacity

Theme	Second Order Codes (3)	First Order Codes (47)
Incubating hope from outside the person	Coach instills hope	Beloved "momma bear" warden Benevolent mentorship of the hurting Chosen for development Coaching as hope conveyor Coaching cohort as lifelong family members Constructive power of coaching Correctional staff conveying dignity Deep bonding with facilitators Developing hope multipliers Equipping with effective non-violent tools Extraordinary commitment to others' betterment Facilitator watch care Family-validated transformation Looking for love in the right places Passing on the power of belief Peer facilitation power Power of coach's belief in coachee Power of official's belief in an inmate Power of physical touch Stubborn belief in another The power of exposure to a hopeful environment Unparallelled power Warden as dignity conveyor
	Community context	Alternate digital reality Carceral based coaching cohort as post-release support network Community formation as counter cultural Contagion effects generated by facilitator Courage to have community Culture co-curation Gang leadership participation in coaching program Language barriers Network of transformed individuals Power of peer belief in an individual Prison gang hierarchy Protecting the opportunity for others to be coached Reentry support system encourages self-efficacy Safe space for vulnerability bursts the emotional dam Surprised by vulnerability's benefits

	Providing pathway visibility [warden]	Credential attainment as a motivator Credentialing as program progression attractant Giving room to fly One course leads to another Qualified to progress to advanced coaching education Rescuer from shackles of own mind Rescuer to whom it's difficult to say 'no' Warden offering pathway to enhance residents' futures Warden on offense as coaching pathway provider

Theme	Second Order Codes (4)	First Order Codes (38)
Incubating hope from within the person	Coaching tools applied	Coaching as universal tool Equipping with the tools to thrive Failures as tuition Healthy habit formation Making better decisions Powerful questions as a mirror Pride in coaching others Understanding the destructive power of bitterness
	Increasing Dignity	All want dignity in the context of thriving Confidence in transformed self Humans are not projects Inherent self-worth
	Providing pathway visibility [resident]	Becoming a pathway provider Exposed to another way of living Habilitation, not rehabilitation Prison's ability to cultivate betterment Space in the green house for all flowers
	Spirituality's role	An unlikely spiritually transformed leader emerges Coaching as a form of faith Coaching manual compared to Bible Convinced of God's work in one's life Facilitator as 'vessel for God's work' Faith not overt part of training Faith of facilitator God's plan clarifying Journey of faith in God Prayers of facilitator Religion as a hand-me down

		Religiosity as significant transformation component Religiosity expressed as God's sovereignty Religious exposure in youth Religious tension Spiritual element defined as "purpose greater than self" Spiritual not a personal focus Spiritual seeker Spirituality in the form of higher power belief and worship Spirituality not central to coaching program Thankfulness to God for one's gifts

Theme	Second Order Codes (3)	First Order Codes (32)
Hoping	Agency Exercise	Agency exercise as a conscious decision Agency exercise toward a specific, healthy schedule Agency exercise toward knowledge transfer Conscious loss of agency Creative agency exercise in the post-release environment Incremental goal setting as agency display Innate pathway finding instincts More than talk Power of incremental goal setting Willing to do the work love requires
	Shifting mindset	Coaching as a powerful introspection tool Coaching equips with permanent thinking skills Coaching to shift mindset Disciplining the mind Envisioning the pathway Knowing the mind's power Manning the mind's gate Morphing the punishment mindset Overcoming notion of 'coaching in prison' as oxymoron Providing mind therapy Staying focused Taking thoughts captive Transforming takes time
	Taking the pathway	Coaching evangelism Core Three among Ten Pioneers Discernment skills used for good Hungry to share Innate intellectual curiosity One person can start a transformational movement Pioneers as stewards of the program Society defines success Witnessing transformation produces belief

Theme	Second Order Codes (5)	First Order Codes (76)
Transforming	Demonstrating accountability	Accountability ownership Doing the necessary work Owning past mistakes encourages behavior change Practicing the behaviors of the person you want to become Remorse over damage caused by one's crimes The time is doing you Willingness to be coached by a fellow resident
	Developing future orientation	High-specificity future orientation Material and financial bootstrapping 'Pay it forward' mentality Peace through releasing the past Readying for release Transporting to the future
	Expressing self-efficacy	Belief in ability to complete the journey Coaching changes mindset and clarifies purpose Coaching enabling conscious forethought toward goal setting Coaching enabling courage Coaching provoked change in thinking Desire to realize full potential Equipping with survival skills Free to be me Imagining the future Obstacle immunity Opposition as 'extra weight on the bar' Pedestrian headwinds no longer derail Post-release conduct competence Purpose found independent of release aspirations Resiliency as post-release necessity Ten Pioneers
	Redeveloping of identity	"Black sheep" during youth Asking - 'What kind of person am I?' Coachees become coaches Coaching as an equipper Coaching as becoming Coaching brings to light one's true identity Coaching exposes the identity gap Coaching opens window of self-understanding Gang member identity Helping to mature

		Identifying as a coach Learning a new lifestyle Perception of accelerated maturity Role modeling as necessity Veracity of identity change
	Relating with other people	Asking powerful questions Coach and coachee as a complementing dance partners Coaching as a resident to staff communication enhancer Coaching creates sacred space to be vulnerable Contagion effects of observable transformation in others Convincing authorities of coaching's potential Correctional Officer to resident dynamics Correctional staff ambivalence Correctional staff control Crucial conversation competency Deep collaboration in program development Desire and technique combine to help another Family support during incarceration Gratefulness to facilitator for allowing authenticity Gratitude towards facilitators How to properly utilize physical touch Humility among both coachees and coaches Learning to seek to understand others Listening well as a priority Loving your neighbor Positive nature of peer pressure toward vulnerability Power of active listening Race relations awareness Respect toward facilitators Routine verbal discourse competence Showing deep gratitude to another Support from "inside" the system Transformation yields commitment to transparency Universal applicability of coaching at relationship interface Unwritten code of conduct among residents Vocabulary makeover Working to listen

Theme	**Second Order Codes (6)**	**First Order Codes (59)**
Thriving	Employment success	Career self-efficacy Career success financially Career traction formation Coaching as an enabler of post-release employment

	Coaching morphing to a profession Entrepreneurial action to create employment Multiple post-release jobs at large companies Realizing reentry success Short path to post-release employment Transitioning to employment successfully
Family and peer support network	Coaching improves family relationships Cohort members as family Family and loved ones' support in release preparation Family and other support precedes employment Family support critical to reintegration Post-release identity resilience in the face of doubters
Living with momentum	Coaching as growth accelerant Enduring the doubters Longitudinal development Pioneers as curators of the program Replacing reacting with thinking Thankfulness for present yields hope for tomorrow Warning alarm for emerging destructive behavior
Occupation and roles post-release	Coaching as career pathway Coaching others as a post-release occupation Coaching skills and abilities Identifying as a coaching expert Self-efficacy in the workplace
Reintegration journey	Big plans for post-release Building financial operating ecosystem Coaching as a gift to the returning citizen's loved ones Coaching as a life saver Distressing daily living incompetence upon reentry Friendships formed that endure Institutionalization is a reality Post-release physical peer presence support system loss Reentry into altered civilian ecosystem Ticking life clock awareness Waning post-release self-efficacy Wilted outside support system
Wellness evidences	Best days Clarifying power of coaching Coaching as a mirror Coaching program positively changed prison behavioral norms Demographic blindness in carceral friendships

		Diverse but united for good Education that lifts one higher Emotive evidence of transformed thinking Facing one's past Finding one's passion Judgement free zone Moving beyond self to help others Putting the past in the proper frame Race consciousness Racial minorities as cohort majority Realizing the inspirational power of one's story Seeing prison culture change is believing Viewing from multiple perspectives Visibility of coaching program's impact

APPENDIX G: THEMES AND SECOND ORDER CODE STRUCTURE AND DEFINITIONS

Theme	Second Order Codes and Definitions
Surviving	**Low hope (pre-incarceration)** - *Little or no expectation of goal attainment prior to incarceration*
	Low hope during incarceration - *Little or no expectation of goal attainment following incarceration*
	Pathways exist - *The presence of an opportunity in which one may engage*
Incubating hope from outside the person	**Providing pathway visibility [warden]** - *Warden or facilitator providing visibility to an opportunity*
	Coach instills hope - *The ability to transmit things necessary to meeting a human psychological need*
	Community context - *A group of people among whom one is an integral part*
Incubating hope from within the person	**Coaching tools applied** - *The process of creating by applying tools attained from coaching program*
	Providing pathway visibility [resident] - *Inmate providing visibility to an opportunity*
	Increasing dignity - *Increase in self-worth such as in the experience of being connected and inspired associated with the dignity conveying power of work (Gibson et al., 2023, p. 218)*
	Spirituality's role - *How one's faith in God impacts behavior*
Hoping	**Shifting mindset** - *A change in one's thinking processes*
	Agency exercise - *The will to do something (Snyder et al., 1991)*
	Taking the pathway qa
Transforming	**Redeveloping of identity** - *Redevelopment of an individual's concept of their self (Haesen et al., 2017)*
	Expressing self-efficacy - *One's belief in their own capacity to behave in ways that contribute to achieving performance goals (Bandura, 1977)*
	Demonstrating accountability - *Willing to be held responsible for one's actions and the associated outcomes*
	Relating with other people - *How one interacts with others*
	Developing future orientation - Thinking and behaving in future focused ways
Thriving	**Family and peer support network** - *The network of relatives and close friends who provide a support system prior to and after release*
	Employment success - *Engaging successfully in meaningful employment*
	Occupation and roles post-release - *Realizing employment after leaving prison*
	Reintegration journey - *Reintegration defined as - the process of social and economic reintegration following a stay in prison. (Morenoff & Harding, 2014).*
	Living with momentum - *An autocatalyzed thinking and behavioral cycle that manifests as confident agency exercise and taking of pathways in a sustained cycle*
	Wellness evidences - *Evidences of emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual well-being (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2016) together or individually*

APPENDIX H: NORMALIZATION OF FIRST ORDER CODE COUNT

Note: as a Function of Interview Words per Participant Shown by Theme and Classification of Difference

Pioneers subgroup (n=6) first order code count by theme:

Participant	Surviving	Incubating Hope	Hoping	Transforming	Thriving	Participant words in interview (100's)
One (raw)	3	10	2	1	4	56.38
One (normalized)	**0.053**	**0.177**	**0.035**	**0.018**	**0.071**	
Two (raw)	0	8	4	5	2	64.70
Two (normalized)	**0.000**	**0.124**	**0.062**	**0.077**	**0.031**	
Three (raw)	3	9	4	8	8	40.86
Three (normalized)	**0.073**	**0.220**	**0.098**	**0.196**	**0.196**	
Four (raw)	2	7	2	7	4	31.68
Four (normalized)	**0.063**	**0.221**	**0.063**	**0.221**	**0.126**	
Five (raw)	1	5	1	5	2	38.11
Five (normalized)	**0.026**	**0.131**	**0.026**	**0.131**	**0.052**	
Six (raw)	1	5	2	6	4	31.30
Six (normalized)	**0.032**	**0.160**	**0.064**	**0.192**	**0.128**	
Normalized Average =	**0.041**	**0.172**	**0.058**	**0.139**	**0.101**	

Next Gen subgroup (n=10) first order code count by theme:

Participant	Surviving	Incubating Hope	Hoping	Transforming	Thriving	Participant words in interview (100's)
Seven (raw)	2	3	0	6	4	53.59
Seven (normalized)	**0.037**	**0.056**	**0.000**	**0.112**	**0.075**	
Eight (raw)	0	2	0	5	0	35.35
Eight (normalized)	**0.000**	**0.057**	**0.000**	**0.141**	**0.000**	
Nine (raw)	4	8	3	7	3	59.05
Nine (normalized)	**0.068**	**0.135**	**0.051**	**0.119**	**0.051**	
Ten (raw)	1	3	2	2	5	28.03
Ten (normalized)	**0.036**	**0.107**	**0.071**	**0.071**	**0.178**	
Eleven (raw)	0	1	2	9	2	74.74
Eleven (normalized)	**0.000**	**0.013**	**0.027**	**0.120**	**0.027**	
Twelve (raw)	2	4	0	3	4	21.09
Twelve (normalized)	**0.095**	**0.190**	**0.000**	**0.142**	**0.190**	
Thirteen (raw)	1	5	1	3	1	38.04
Thirteen (normalized)	**0.026**	**0.131**	**0.026**	**0.079**	**0.026**	
Fourteen (raw)	5	3	5	3	7	35.62
Fourteen (normalized)	**0.140**	**0.084**	**0.140**	**0.084**	**0.197**	
Fifteen (raw)	1	3	0	1	3	27.55
Fifteen (normalized)	**0.036**	**0.109**	**0.000**	**0.036**	**0.109**	
Sixteen (raw)	2	4	2	2	4	39.65
Sixteen (normalized)	**0.050**	**0.101**	**0.050**	**0.050**	**0.101**	
Normalized Average =	**0.049**	**0.098**	**0.037**	**0.096**	**0.095**	